

THE BELL



RINGER

Montgomery Bell Academy

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MYSTERY ON THE HILL



Cannon painting suspects abound McKay investigates

By McKay Proctor
Staff Investigator

As you may or may not be aware, a month ago on the evening of Wednesday, April 6th, someone took it upon himself to add a fresh coat of paint to the cannons outside of the Carter Building. One odd thing about this act of charity was the fact that instead of the customary black, these Good Samaritans decided to paint them a bright shade of orange.

Accompanying the new take on the cannon, a strange marking resembling an upper case "E" graced the brick walkway



Andy Warhol's signature style of painting things colors they should not be makes the artist suspect number one.

and ancient tree outside of Carter, likewise in orange. Most subtle of these cosmetic changes was a correction of the way the school had spelled the word "classrooms" on the sign identifying the Carter Building.

This is all very mysterious. Who could possess such magnificent altruism as to "makeover" these landmarks of the campus in such a strange fashion? It simply does not add up, so *The Bell Ringer* took the initiative to investigate this matter, coming up with several leads:

Lead 1: Andy Warhol.

No single person in the history of the world is more famous for painting things colors that they shouldn't be than Andy Warhol. The artist is famous for changing the colors of cans of soup, Hollywood stars' faces, and even lethal weapons on occasion. This infatuation with unnatural color schemes made Warhol the first suspect in this investigation. Some call him the "Father of Pop Art," but this reporter sees through that clever ruse. When *The Bell Ringer* tracked him to his home at the Dakota in New York, we found that he had died on February 27, 1987. Warhol refused comment when contacted for questioning.

>> CANNON, P6

Administration unveils two-faceted plan to replace Mr. Tillman

Dr. Seay becoming Director of the High School
Mr. Norton becoming Dean of the High School

By Karthik Sastry
News Editor

Ever since Mr. Tillman announced his intention to step down as head of the high school, people on The Hill have been asking several pressing questions: Who's going to deal with all the absences and demerits? Who's going to be in charge of academics? And, most importantly, who's going to take all the pictures?

Now it seems that the answers have finally arrived. The tough task of managing the high school will be split between

two positions beginning next fall. Dr. Rick Seay ('79) will serve as Director of the High School, and Mr. William Norton ('99) will step into the newly-created position of Dean of the High School.

MBA's general academic program, grades 7-12, will be overseen by Dr. Seay. He will remain in his Carter Building office, lest he have to abandon his eager advisees or collection of theater props from old MBA productions. The position of Academic Dean will be removed altogether, merged into his new role.

>> NEW, P15

New courts now in play

Big Red breaks in courts with victory over Baylor

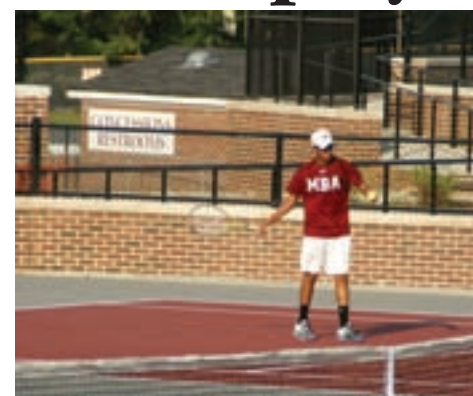
By Lucas Littlejohn
Staff Tennis Player

After about nine to ten long months, the finishing touches are now being made on the nearly collegiate-level, new Big Red tennis courts. The facility itself is no less than spectacular.

It features a beautiful brick pavilion with a white roof, bathrooms, plenty of standing room, and bleachers. On one side of the pavilion are three courts which lead to the large stands, now permanently in place after their long stay in front of the old courts.

The other five courts extend out from the east side of the pavilion toward the baseball field and Wilson Avenue. Also, two rows of seating overlook all eight courts from behind.

Conveniently, there is a sidewalk from the pavilion to the walkway in front of the football field stands. As for the courts, they are silky smooth. New tennis courts tend to be very "grippy," meaning that they have



Kalyan Chadavada plays #6 en route to a team win over state rival Baylor.

yet to be worn down, and the new surface slows down the balls and wears out shoes more quickly. Yet these courts, even being new, are not too slow or rubbery.

So far, the Big Red varsity tennis team has gone 3-0 on the new courts, defeating arch-rival Baylor, then Greenwood High of Bowling Green, and Father Ryan.

Our match with Baylor was an appropriate and extremely exciting way to christen the new facility. Because of

>> COURTS, P15



22

INSIDE



21



24



THE BELL RINGER

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Letters to the Editor are encouraged, and can be delivered to its office, the Faculty Advisors, the Editors, or sent to bellringer@fc.montgomerybell.com (simply type 'Bell Ringer' into First Class). These letters must be signed; The Bell Ringer neither publishes anonymous submissions of opinions or articles nor permits individuals to remain unidentified unless protected by other rules of confidentiality at MBA. Letters will be edited for length and clarity.

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Election speeches need work

By Jack Hallemann
Staff Writer

Well, it's the spring, and at MBA that means class elections. Do me a favor and try to remember as many specific election speeches as you can. How many can you recall?

Out of six years of student council and class officer speeches, I can only remember three distinctly. Bill Shofner's pledge to shave his head should he win, Nathan Tinnel's artistic demonstration of paper origami, and Mitchell Shope's heartfelt story about his dog Jasper are the only ones that stuck. I remember these speeches because they were different. They had originality and didn't get lost in a mindless listing of service hours and dedication to the class.

I recently sat in on the election speeches of another grade to gain an outsider's perspective. During the meeting, a pattern was established. Most speeches used this basic outline:

"Hey, guys! If you don't know me, my name is _____. I'm running for _____. While at MBA, I have (list accomplishments regardless of association to position). (Vague statement



about working hard). If elected, I'd listen to your requests and represent you. Please vote for me. Thanks."

There's nothing wrong with this speech; it's just forgettable. This format is similar to the rigid structure of our quarterly themes.

Just like many themes, this system lacks creativity. This speech would not inspire anyone to change their vote. In the case of one student, his entire speech consisted of his name and the position for which he was a candidate. After these two sentences, he thanked the class and sat down.

This disregard for the importance of election speeches reflects the mindset of most students: these

speeches don't matter. Most classes have one meeting in which all the students read their speeches. At another meeting, sometimes as much as a week later, the students vote on their officers. None of the students remember, much less consider, the speeches when they are casting their votes.

Ultimately, most students vote for the most popular candidate or the one they respect most, and, honestly, I don't think that's

a bad thing. The class officers only have an influence if they can bring together the support of the class. A class officer who's social and well-liked will have an easier time getting volunteers and organizing events than one who is not.

In a perfect world, the student council president would always be the candidate with the best ideas about the future of the school and who can lead a fair number of students to help him fulfill those ideas, but that quality is tough to gauge, and often the president ends up being the one who can make the microbes laugh.

The Bell Ringer supports John Mark Bellet and wishes him all the best for next year as Student Body President.

The Bell Ringer still cares about Egypt



Riot police spray water overhead to break up crowds in Egypt.

By Jesse Suh
Staff Editor

Scenes from a few months ago: thousands gathering in Tahrir Square calling for the ouster of a dictator in power for 30 years, the United States Secretary of State saying another government must govern in a different way, and that same dictator finally succumbing to overwhelming opposition and leaving the country. All of these are scenes from Egypt as a revolution organized among the people swept across the country and toppled the ruling dictatorship.

I know what everyone is thinking, and, no, this column is not months late. The sexy part of Egypt's transition is over. Much of the media's attention has shifted toward another violent revolution happening in Libya against long-time dictator Muammar Gaddafi. What is left in Egypt now is an interim government run primarily by the military, whose support was

integral in getting the dictator Hosni Mubarak to step down. Getting rid of Mubarak was only the start of Egypt's attempt to rebuild their country. What happens next will have long-lasting consequences in Egypt and potentially the geopolitics of the Middle East as a whole.

There is the issue of what kind of government Egypt will want to have in the longterm. Though the protests were mostly pro-democracy, the groups that have emerged as potential players in a new political system have had varied interests. The Muslim Brotherhood, a fundamentalist Islamist group, has called for civil governance, but Egypt's pro-democracy activists have been skeptical. History makes them wary as the Iranian revolution against the Shah's authoritarian rule led to an Islamic theocracy and an Iran with very little political freedom. This past example also makes the United States concerned about its own foreign policy. Like the Shah, Mubarak was pro-America. It will be

interesting to gauge the United States' role in the formation of a new government as its interest in spreading democratic elections could very well clash with having a party as sympathetic to America as Mubarak.

The United States' former dealings with Egypt may have already affected how successful its experiment with democracy is. The army, which is the head of Egypt's caretaker government, is in possession of most of the investments and deals made between the two countries. At the expense of authentic democracy, the army could very well hold onto government power so as to not reveal or distribute whatever the United States has invested.

Ultimately, as the revolution itself was organic, the United States may want to keep its role limited in its dealings with Egypt in this vulnerable period of transition. How the United States carries itself in light of Egypt's pro-democracy revolution could determine how other Gulf countries such as Yemen, Syria, and Libya react.



Zia

Art - Antiques - Flowers
4115 Hillsboro Rd.

SPECIAL EDITION

In the wake of the Usama bin Laden's death, MBA remembers 9/11, reflects on the SEALs' mission, and feels very proud to be Americans.



President Obama announced bin Laden's death Sunday

The speech drew over 56 million American viewers. The opening paragraphs are reprinted below.



"Good evening. Tonight, I can report to the American people and to the world that the United States has conducted an operation that killed Osama bin Laden, the leader of al Qaeda, and a terrorist who's responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children.

It was nearly 10 years ago that a bright September day was darkened by the worst attack on the American people in our history. The images of 9/11 are seared into our national memory -- hijacked planes cutting through a cloudless September sky; the Twin Towers collapsing to the ground; black smoke billowing up from the Pentagon; the wreckage of Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where the actions of heroic citizens saved even more heartbreak and destruction.

And yet we know that the worst images are those that were unseen to the world. The empty seat at the dinner table. Children who were forced to grow up without their mother or their father. Parents who would

never know the feeling of their child's embrace. Nearly 3,000 citizens taken from us, leaving a gaping hole in our hearts.

On September 11, 2001, in our time of grief, the American people came together. We offered our neighbors a hand, and we offered the wounded our blood. We reaffirmed our ties to each other, and our love of community and country. On that day, no matter where we came from, what God we prayed to, or what race or ethnicity we were, we were united as one American family.

We were also united in our resolve to protect our nation and to bring those who committed this vicious attack to justice. We quickly learned that the 9/11 attacks were carried out by al Qaeda -- an organization headed by Osama bin Laden, which had openly declared war on the United States and was committed to killing innocents in our country and around the globe. And so we went to war against al Qaeda to protect our citizens, our friends, and our allies."

News of bin Laden's death resonates nationwide

Seniors offer their sentiments

By Andrew Powell
Editor-in-Chief

Normally this paper does not cover national stories. The purpose of a high school paper is not the same as that of *The New York Times* or the like. Each paper tells the news of its readership, and as a result, the *Times* has a greater purview than the *Ringer*.

This instance is no different. The death of Usama bin Laden is a local story. It affects individuals within our community, in one way or another, just as it affects everyone else in America -- broader, in fact -- everyone else in the world.

The story to be told is the common experience of a people; in particular, the younger generation, who have grown up in a post-9/11 world. Life in America fundamentally changed because of 9/11. Adults who had an established way of life had to adjust to a new norm after that clear, Tuesday morning. Those of us who do not remember much before 9/11 have simply lived within this new norm throughout our entire remembered lives. From the major tightening of Homeland Security (and, more importantly, the creation of the department that now includes 230,000 employees), to the less tangible effects that the specter of fear has wrought on our country, the U.S.A. is a different place now than it was ten years ago.

Mohammad Mehio, a senior at MBA who practices Islam, has seen and felt his world fundamentally change because of bin Laden's actions and their implications for the Muslim community in America. "Bin Laden, for ten years now, has made many Muslims' lives, including mine, very difficult to manage; incidents such as the Murfreesboro Mosque trials to the general increase in racial profiling against us have instilled our frustration against bin Laden. To finally hear that the U.S. has finally pinned down bin Laden, I am reminded of my pride for living in this country,

>> USAMA, continued on next



The most fervent, emotional headlines following the news of Usama bin Laden's death came from New York newspapers.

>> **USAMA**, from previous

how well founded it is on the concepts of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and how hard its citizens strive everyday to uphold these ideals.”

Some of us have more personal connections to the event than others. Most all of us share one perspective, however – that gained from being an American citizen at the time of the attacks and through the progression of the War on Terror. Regardless of politics or religion, we are united in the kinship of our flag and the nobility of our mission.

For these reasons, the historic occasion of bin Laden’s death is local story just as it is a global one, a personal story as it is a national one. Our thoughts and impressions describe whom we are as a people, and to tell this story, *The Bell Ringer* attempted to capture some of the sentiments around campus.

Father-Son dinner speaker Marcus Luttrell’s reaction to the military success is chronicled on Facebook and Twitter. The first tweet, time-stamped at 10:30 p.m. Sunday, May 1st, read simply, “See you in Hell OBL.”

Just minutes later, he added a light-hearted comment about how awesome the US military is. “Livin the good life in Pak. Won’t protect u from a 2,000 lbs JDAM.” (Editor’s note: JDAM stands for Joint Direct Attack Munition). He, like many others when the news first broke, assumed that a bomb rather than a U.S. Special Operations team had neutralized Usama.

Half an hour later, as he seemed to processing the news more thoroughly, his tone was more somber and appreciative. “Great day for all our fallen both military and civilian. Thanks to all Americans for thoughts and prayers. Always knew we would get him.”

Soon after, “Great job to all active military. Hope the 911 families can take a deep breath, I know this doesn’t cover their loss but the gavel has dropped. Verdict was death.”

The more he thought about the achievement of the military, the broader his perspective seemed to become. Through the first hour he knew about Usama’s death, Luttrell’s sentiments progressed from relief of personal vengeance (“see you in Hell”), to patriotic satisfaction in the success of his brothers and sisters in the military, and then to appreciation of the closure he hoped the news brought to 9/11 families. And of course, his dedication to his fellow SEALs made an appearance, too. Around midnight, he hinted at the fact that it was Navy SEALs who carried out the mission: “Would love to confirm it was Team guys that rolled on target, but I can’t say anything till the full story comes out. Hope y’all understand.” Roger that.

One of MBA’s own military heroes, CPT Will Norton, expressed his sentiments – not on twitter, but in an email to *The Bell Ringer* – saying, “The news last night brought an indescribable emotion of relief, satisfaction and gratefulness. Reflecting on how this one man had impacted our lives and the lives of so many, my wife and I watched the news into the early morning hours on Monday. I am quite confident that without this man’s evil leadership we would not have gone to war with the Taliban or Iraq. UBL can be credited not only for the worst attack on American soil (just under 3,000

deaths), but also for the 6,000+ service men and women who have been killed in the War on Terror. The death of UBL brings a bit of closure to the countless sacrifices that this country has made in response to this man’s inhumane agenda and hopefully will result in an expeditious redeployment of our troops in Afghanistan. The occasion also serves to unite the US as we reflect on the goodness, life and liberty that our nation represents. I could not be more proud of our military and our nation’s values.”

The senior class composes the majority of the students on campus who clearly remember September 11th, 2001. “We were in 3rd grade. I remember we got out of school early but I wasn’t sure why,” Tom Markham recalls. “My parents were supposed to be flying out to Utah or something that same day, but luckily their flight was delayed. I think at the time I was probably too young to understand the magnitude of the event, but Osama bin Laden’s recent death really brings it all back home. It’s been ten years now, and so much has happened since then. I think it’s just incredible to see this momentous occasion happen at the time it did in our country’s recent history. It’s cool and chilling at the same time to say that I’ve lived it,” Tom says.

A classmate of Tom’s at Oak Hill, Matthew Johnson, remembers mostly the feelings of confusion. “I had no idea what was going on and when my parents tried to explain to me what had happened, I was engulfed by a sense of fear. I was scared that another one might come to Nashville and hurt or even kill my dad. I was also worried about my uncle because he was working in New York at the time.”

Philip Spelman remembers sitting at Overbrook and watching the second building fall as his teacher cried. “The whole school then went to the gym for prayer. It was Catholic school and all. I will never forget it.”

Cedric Smith says he remembers every single little detail about the day, especially the effect that the news had on his mom. “My mom came and picked up all of my friends who lived in the neighborhood. We all piled in into her big Ford Excursion, and she drove us home as quickly as possible. I’ve never seen my mother drive that fast in my life. She seemed to be disobeying every traffic law I could think of. On our way home my mother did not say a word. We would ask her what was going on and she wouldn’t respond. It was like she was in a trance,” Cedric remembers.

Nick Kohler spent much of the day in prayer on his own. “My dad was supposed to have a meeting in the WTC on 9/11, so when I heard of the attacks I didn’t know that he was alive until the airwaves cleared up around 5PM. Needless to say it was a hard day.”

I was homeschooled at the time, and I watched the second plane’s collision live on the news, just minutes after turning on my tv. I remember getting mad at my mom when she wanted to check the news and thus delay my enjoyment of cartoon network – thank God she insisted, or we would have missed the coverage. The fiery image has since been seared in my mind. That image was the first thing that came to mind Sunday night, when I heard Usama had finally been killed.

Stephen Bedard, like I, was at home watching the tv as the second plane crashed into the south tower. “I don’t remember why

I was home, maybe a late start at school or something, but I remember very clearly watching the second plane hit,” Stephen says.

Another who will never forget the stomach-wrenching sight of watching the second plane hit live is Ian Sharbel. “(My family) lived in California at the time of the attack and my father was getting ready to go to work when the first plane hit. I remember him calling my brother and me into our parents’ bedroom where we sat and watched the second plane impact the towers. He headed off to work and I remember a slightly concerned tone in his voice as to what this might mean for our future. As the morning proceeded, I remember watching the people jump from the top floors of the building and then ultimately the collapse of the twin towers. It was a sight no man should ever forget.”

John Sehrt remembers everything clearly, and like Ian, he will forget none of it. “It was the first half of fourth grade, yes fourth, I was a grade ahead of everyone at the time. I was on the way to lunch when the headmaster of our school stopped us and told us what had happened. At the time I thought so what, it’s just a plane crash. It wasn’t till later that I realized the severity of the crashes. I was devastated. I had family in New York City at the time and all I could do was pray for their safety until I heard that they were unharmed. The image of those planes going into those great buildings will be burned into the back of my mind till the day I die.”

Gage Baxter remembers, from his days at Ensworth, his teacher as “she came back in to pull out a map and try to explain through tears where the attack was.”

Wentao Zhang was living in a middle region of China when the attacks happened. “Because of the time difference, I went to bed before the attacks happened. I remember waking up and seeing everything on the news. We were all shocked. I was confused. I didn’t know why it had happened.”

Wentao went on to talk about how he believes that he felt less sadness than average Americans – which is understandable, as 9/11/2001 was long before he came to live in America himself – but even from central China he felt the confusion and outrage that overcame the U.S.A. Since moving to Nashville four years ago, however, he as adopted the same personal, emotional connection that we all share in response to the pain of the attacks.

Reflecting on the terror that followed the attack, Will Granbery says his third grade trip was cancelled “because all the terrorists where gonna come after those Christian elementary schools in Nashville, Tennessee. Thinking back on this constant state of fear, I forgot about how terrifying 9/11 was to people. With the death of Osama, I feel like the world can be a safer place.”

The sense of safety and “relief, satisfaction, and gratefulness” that CPT Norton described has been the foundation for people’s celebrations in response to bin Laden’s death. While in many cases chanting “U-S-A” in the streets in response to killing someone could hint at jingoism, the jubilation is motivated by much more than mere revenge; the act reflects our nation’s commitment to justice and dedication to freedom.

Patriotic demonstrations have sprung

up across the nation, at national monuments and in the quads of college campuses. Some have criticized the rah-rah, passionate, public response as unbecoming of the reserved, liberal nation we pride ourselves on being. Some cite Gandhi’s statement that “an eye for an eye makes the world blind” as a categorical dismissal of any justification for violent acts of revenge.

Mitchell Shope says people should focus on feeling relief rather than satiation from revenge. “People should not parade at his death and revel in their revenge. People shouldn’t chant “USA” and demonstrate our dominance; I believe that they should feel relieved by his death and a little bit safer on our soil.”

Cedric Smith sees both ways on the issue, but also wishes the demonstrations were more reserved. “I understand that this man has killed many people and deserved what he had coming, but no one should be celebrating the death of another human. I don’t think it is right. No matter how bad that person is. It seemed that all the news stations were glorifying the death of this human being as well. Osama may have been killed, but Al Qaeda is still alive and well.”

Daniel Rundberg disagrees with those uncomfortable with the bold demonstrations. “That anyone would not openly celebrate his death as a triumph in the war on terrorism and Al-Qaeda and as a symbolic act of retribution for the Americans who were killed in 9/11 is beyond me to comprehend,” Daniel explains. “Hearing the news last weekend was like a needle being removed from my brain.”

Sam Givens reflected on the situation as an issue of our character as a nation. “America was founded on the ideas of democracy and freedom. Anyone who takes that away, as Bin Laden took freedom of life from thousands and caused grief to countless families with his mass murder and terrorism, should face the full retribution of Americans, who have died for centuries to give you and me that right.”

Matthew Johnson remarked that, “We are celebrating the fact that for those people who died on that horrible 9/11 day... their executor was brought to justice when the brave American team killed bin Laden. George W. Bush said, ‘No matter how long it takes, justice will be done.’ Justice has been done.” Jarvis Werkhaven says that he is “celebrating because his death is a symbol of the U.S. making progress to help stop Al Qaeda.”

While celebrating for now, John Sehrt realizes that this does not mark the end of the battle. “Hopefully we can continue to slowly hack away at al-Qaeda and the Taliban, or at least keep them at bay. God bless the men and women who serve this country and God bless the U.S.A.” Harrison Luna agrees that there is much work still to be done. “How much tactical value (his death) has is more than I could conjecture, but for now I think we can get at least some satisfaction from it as a concrete victory in this war.”

I am sure that with time this event will become politicized, that arguments will break out over whether Obama deserves most of the credit for the success or if thanks is really due to Bush’s policies and programs, or that the credit is due unilaterally to the SEALs team for taking out the Al Qaeda leader. For now, however, let us put aside our disagreements, applaud the heroism, and savor the unity.

Nuclear is necessary, fear is not

By Joe Scherrer
Staff Core Meltdown

In light of the Fukushima nuclear accident, most of you probably have a strong conviction that nuclear power is an unreliable and dangerous power source that is simply not worth the risks – indeed, to the general public, what is essentially a controlled atomic bomb sounds like a lunatic idea.

What most people don't realize, however, is that most of the information regarding nuclear power is unreliable, distorted, or just plain wrong, and that many of the accusations aimed at nuclear power are simply attempts at fear-mongering aimed at a severely ignorant public. Let's get our science facts from, say, scientists, shall we? I talked with Dr. Joe Hamilton, recipient of numerous international awards in nuclear physics and co-discoverer of element 117, to get to the bottom of the nuclear power debate.

Dr. Hamilton says that most of the fears about nuclear power tend to fall into two main categories: fears that the radiation released from power plants poses serious risks for people and the environment, and fears that nuclear disasters, such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, will become more common. Let's take a look at the first concern.

The average nuclear power plant releases about 30 μ Sv of radiation each year – to put that in perspective, you receive

over 10 times that radiation just from natural potassium in your body, and over 100 times from a chest CT scan. In fact, a coal-burning plant of equivalent power output releases over 100 times the radiation as a nuclear plant, not to mention other substances such as mercury and arsenic.

Additionally, Dr. Hamilton emphasizes that the deaths attributed to nuclear power in the US number *zero*. That's right, no one in the US has ever died due to radiation from nuclear power plants, and that includes accidents such as Three Mile Island. In comparison, conservative estimates of coal-ash-related deaths number in the 10,000s *each year*.

Even concerns over the disposal of nuclear waste are unnecessary, as Dr. Hamilton says that most scientists agree that the current storage of spent fuel is completely safe and sustainable. Clearly, the supposed threat that nuclear power poses when it is running safely is essentially non-existent.

But wait, you say, what about accidents like Chernobyl? Isn't the risk of catastrophic failure simply too great? Unfortunately, catastrophic plant failures have been blown out of proportion by the media, both in their probability of occurring and their consequences. What most people don't realize is that all three major nuclear accidents, Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, and Fukushima, were completely avoidable, and that only Chernobyl caused any real environmental damage.

The Chernobyl disaster, for one, can be attributed entirely to multiple, major design flaws and operator error – the reactor didn't even possess a containment vessel to shield the core, and the meltdown itself was caused when the plant operators decided to conduct a little “experiment” to see how much power they could produce before the emergency genera-

tors kicked in! As Dr. Hamilton says, the Chernobyl incident is the result of truly pathetic design and management and is simply irrelevant to any modern reactor concerns.

The Fukushima accident was also the result of bad planning and construction. For one, the reactor was only designed to withstand 7.9 magnitude earthquakes, not the 8.1 that rocked Japan last month. Nor did the designers implement adequate safety measures against tsunamis, though tsunamis were known to be a serious threat in the area.

The decision to store spent fuel on top of the reactor core (Dr. Hamilton: “What were they thinking!?”) only aggravated the release of radioactive material, but, regardless, the environmental damage has remained minimal – dose rates 10 km from Fukushima are currently 400mRem/hr, which Dr. Hamilton asserts are “elevated but not extremely dangerous.”

But, still it seems the media has gotten hold of the situation – fears of “radioactive salad” and Simpsons-esque, three-eyed fish near the plant abound. According to Dr. Hamilton and a study published in *Science* magazine, decay products simply aren't adsorbed enough by plants or fish to have any significant environmental impact. Hence, any major effects of the Fukushima accident on the environment remain a fancy of publicity-hungry fear-mongers, who simply mention the word “radioactive” and stir the ignorant masses into a frenzy. Comparisons to the Chernobyl disaster, in which at least 63 workers died of radiation poisoning, are, in Dr. Hamilton's words, “completely ludicrous.”

Another prime example of successful fear mongering is the Three Mile Island incident, in which workers vented radioactive steam due to operator error. Despite the



While entertaining, *The Simpsons* is not a reliable source on the topic of nuclear power. Photo courtesy of FOX.

fact that the maximum public dose from the accident was a harmless 1 mRem (less than 5 times the amount from a CT scan), the public outcry that resulted was enormous, with some protestors claiming (completely falsely) that radiation levels were “life-threatening.” Again, these misinformed individuals immediately panicked upon hearing that radioactive vapor was being pumped into the atmosphere.

It seems, then, that the public's fear of nuclear power is unfounded. Nuclear power plants in normal operation are harmless, and accidents such as Fukushima are both avoidable and greatly exaggerated.

It all comes down to public ignorance. It's almost funny, though – talking to United Nuclear LLC, a company that specializes in hobby nuclear paraphernalia, I learned that the company sold out of potassium iodide pills (the famous “fallout pills” of the cold war) within two days of the Fukushima accident. The pills would have protected the buyer against much of the fallout – if there was any risk of radiation in the US in the first place. In this case, ignorance only cost Americans a few hundred wasted dollars apiece.

But, what happens when our power-hungry planet exhausts its energy sources? Will public ignorance continue to block progress and innovation? If the human race has any hope for the future, we must undergo a nuclear renaissance, unhindered by the media and the gullible public, and we must do it now.



Joe views nuclear power as a positive, not a reason for fear.

>> CANNON FROM P1

Cannon painting investigation yields surprising suspects

Lead 2: Harvey Alcorn Updyke (the guy who poisoned the Toomer's Corner oaks).

Updyke became a suspect in this investigation as a result of circumstantial evidence. First and foremost, he has a history of defacing traditions. A call was also placed to the *Roll Red Roll Call with Jamie Tillman* that was traced back to Updyke's home state of Alabama. The message said: “The cannons will definitely die, you can tell the boss- Roll Tide.” Whoever placed the call knew that well over the lethal dose of bad-paint-job had been administered to the cannon. He, however, spoke too soon in forecasting its doom, as a quickly-applied layer of black saved the mortars from death by tackiness.

There are problems in placing the blame on Updyke. First among them,

THE LINEUP:

Updyke was in prison awaiting trial for criminal mischief on the night in question. Next is the lack of any tangible evidence that he was involved at all. Despite the scanty evidence, it is the theory of Andrew Powell, editor of this paper and avowed

Auburn fan, that Updyke definitely painted the cannon. Powell added “War Eagle.”

Lead 3: Byron, The Big Red dog

Byron was obviously not the first suspect in this investigation, but he definitely had one of the strongest motives. Imagine for a moment that you are a dog, desiring nothing more than to mark your territory but forbidden to assert your dominance because it is unbecoming of a mascot to do such things. It makes perfect sense for Byron to assert his dominance in this manner. In the dead of the night, no one could know that he was responsible, but the message would be sent



#1: Warhol



#2: Updyke



#3: Byron



#4: Whitmore

to all dogs that frequent the campus. The evidence against Byron piled up until *The Bell Ringer* realized that he has no thumbs.

Lead 4: Douglas Philmont Whitmore.

In asking around campus who had any reason to change the cannon's color, one name kept coming up: Douglas Philmont Whitmore. According to his classmates Whitmore had long despised the matte black of the cannonade. Many members of the MBA community recall his musing about how someone should brighten the artillery. The upper case E's also point to

Whitmore. In reality, they were not letters at all, but a rude depiction of Whitmore's yacht. He often denoted his artwork with three-pronged-stick depictions of his vessel the *Low Latitude, High Laxitude*. Even the markings on the sign indicate Whitmore as the culprit. The school called in an expert in spray painting who was asked to analyze the unintelligible smudges. The expert found that the writing said “Lax Hard, Party Harder.” Whitmore became the leading suspect in the case.

The Bell Ringer pursued Whitmore for comment, but he could not be located before press time.

U.S.A. must not over-extend through Libya involvement

By John Mellow
Staff Writer

When George W. Bush gave his now famous (or infamous, depending on your point of view) "Mission Accomplished" speech, he used the word "freedom" twelve times.

This speech, acting as the symbolic conclusion of the war, chose to highlight that we were fighting "for the cause of liberty."

At the time, no one knew that the war was going to drag on. Therefore, this speech was designed to define the legacy of the war. The war's legacy was not that it secured oil fields in the Middle East, or secured an ally in the Middle East, or secured alleged weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. These certainly must have factored into the decision to go to war, but the President chose not to emphasize them.

The war was not painted as a strategic victory for America. Instead, it was painted as an altruistic gesture to the people of Iraq. America was fighting selflessly to ensure democracy and freedom throughout the world.

America's self-appointed role as a purveyor of freedom grew from the Manifest Destiny of the nineteenth century into an imperialistic need to democratize the planet in the twentieth century. We embraced our position as a global hegemon after World War II and used a policy of "containment" to promote American ideals of freedom throughout the world. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan seemed to be the culmination of this policy. In Korea and Vietnam, we intervened in ongoing civil wars, but never before had we invaded a sovereign country (or two) to instill "freedom." The task proved much more taxing

than expected.

When Barack Obama campaigned, he promised to bring these wars to an end. America seemed ready to step down from its post as policeman and freedom-enforcer of the world and accept a less central role in an increasingly globalized world.

Then came Libya. America's intervention in Libya has created what some have called the Obama Doctrine: a strong commitment to human rights, yet often pragmatically and even timidly enforced. Today, America finds itself at a crossroads, struggling to be a leader of the free world while at the same time weary of the distinction.

President Obama's decision to act in Libya has left few satisfied. Right-wing politicians have criticized the President for both failing to act and for acting.

Senator John McCain, an early advocate of swift intervention, criticized the President for waiting. Senator Lindsey Graham wanted more robust action, imploring the president to "cut the head of the snake off" by targeting Gaddafi himself. Possible presidential candidate Newt Gingrich on March 7, before the airstrikes began, told Fox News that he would "exercise a no-fly zone this evening" if he were President.

Yet several weeks later, after the no-fly zone was put in place, Newt said that he "would not have intervened."

Mitt Romney, another 2012 candidate, laments "mission creep" and worries that America is moving toward a prolonged engagement.

While many of these politicians are probably just trying to score some political points, their conflicting statements underscore a larger theme. Even in a party often dogmatic in advocating for the promotion of

freedom, there is uncertainty about how to proceed.

The left is no more organized. The impassioned demonstrations against Iraq are conspicuously absent. The party that advocated nation-building in Rwanda and intervention in Bosnia during the Clinton years is returning. Most Democratic congressmen have thrown support behind the President's action.

Yet there are notable dissenters. Senator Dennis Kucinich suggested the war is an impeachable offense because the President does not have the authority to declare it. Candidate Obama would probably agree, for in 2007 he wrote that "the President does not have power under the Constitution to unilaterally authorize a military attack in a situation that does not involve stopping an actual or imminent threat to the nation." Evidently, the potential for freedom in Libya has confused and clouded his interpretation of the Constitution.

President Obama is not alone in his confusion. The so-called "Arab Spring" has highlighted America's shifting role in the world. All of the positioning in Washington shows that politicians on both sides of the aisle are conflicted in how we should pursue freedom.

There is no doubt that both sides want to pursue democracy. Both sides have justified the war with this refrain. When the



Colonel Muammar Gaddafi is the major opposition in Obama's push for freedom in Libya.

President gave his oval office speech justifying the Libyan airstrikes, he used the word "freedom" seven times. The President who ran for change gave an eerily similar speech to Bush's "Mission Accomplished."

But this time NATO has taken the lead role, and the United Nations has approved the war. America's struggle to lead the fight for freedom alone has led it to welcome global help.

The fact is that both liberal and conservative politicians cannot reach a consensus, even within their own parties, about where the nation's foreign policy goes from here.

The nation that calls its President the Leader of the Free World must decide. Do we continue the foreign policy of the last fifty years and lead the charge for freedom, or, as we struggle with three wars, a debt crisis on the home front, and the loss of our sole superpower status to a multipolar world, do we allow the international community to take over?

So far in Washington, there is no clear answer.

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Sophomores love food, style, grades, each other

By McLean Hudson
Staff Writer

Here is the news on some of our more noteworthy sophomores:

Bradley Long tied with **Tom Bu** at the state math competition (where **Bu** and **Francis Deng** reignited their old flame), **Adam Bowman**'s favorite food is airsoft bullets, and **Ryan Potter** enjoyed watching the new **Harry Potter** with his family. **Chris Briggs** reports that **Franklin**'s real name is **Bernard Milo McKnight Garstin**.

Landon Bullock hasn't worn Abercrombie in almost a week, and **Joe Richardson** serenades **Tom Kaiser** with **Elton John** during study hall. **Jack Kinloch** is just so happy to be friends with **Lawson Factor**, **Jack Brittain**, **Chandler Burgess**, and **Patrick Moody**. **Tommy Douglas** is great at soccer.

Originally, **Chris Habermann** was hoping for a 102 in **Cdr. Carr**'s class, but the last test destroyed that dream, and now he can only hope for a 101.

Also, **Tully** is the lightweight champion of the world. (*Note to faculty-this last comment does not have a double meaning and should not be taken as a summary of Tully's night life. Based on the original context I was given, I would guess that it pertains to some very heterosexual wrestling with **George Swenson** and possibly **Luke Hazen**.)

Will McFadden watched tennis for 7 hours straight, but we beat Baylor, so it's ok. **Patrick** "no these hats are cool" **Moody** likes the meretricious sort of girls (this last post courtesy of someone who is not **Robert Papel**). **Penn Murfee** and **Mr. Herring** time-machined back to the sixties last week. **Penn** came back a little confused, and **Mr. Herring** came back with two floozies and a fro.

Jackson Flora ♥ **Sloane Baxter**. **Christian Sargent** is "learning Russian with **Rosetta Stone**, mostly for fun, but partly to challenge **Hunter Tidwell** in the race to rule the world." **Aidan McSharry** discovered that it was **Colonel Mustard** in the dining room with the lead pipe. **Falkner Werkhaven** warns that **Tom Bu** shouldn't fly so close to the sun or his wings will melt.

Otherwise happy with school right now, **Barry Goldsmith** finds Mrs. Qian's class his toughest. **Andrew Graham** sealed the deal, in tennis. **Mark Lowe** is unbeatable, **Conner Griffin**'s car was maliciously vandalized, and **Hayden Deakins** inspired a poem.

Brooks Best failed us all, and **Gray Bryant** is no longer champion in curveball. Also, **Clay Ramsey** lost a life in curveball because I chatted him in the middle of a point. **Jake Macey** caught a wild Pikachu in Goldenrod (his third of the year!). He also writes, "Dear McLean, nothing about me and Pirkle. Seriously."

(Fin) **Morris** "cueball (not my idea don't hurt me)" **Evan** has given me the exclusive story behind the haircut: his dad gave him \$20 to go get a haircut, but he bought a Nike shirt instead. Then his dad found out and made **Morris** cut it himself. From there it's pretty easy to figure out how he got bald. In other hair-related news, **John Powell** has been "shaving **Derrick Rose**'s head into his stomach hair because he da coldest."

Frank Vest walked into **Ms. Anderson**'s class 35 minutes late with a Wendy's cup and headphones and yelled "SUP FELLAS." On another day (I'm guessing) he hid for the whole class under a



Brooks Best shows his "style" before the Founder's Day race.

pile of backpacks. **Benjamin Haynes** is a hardcore partier, **Jake Macey** is terrible at driving stick, and **Furman Haynes** wears the proverbial pants in his relationship.

George Swenson, **Tate Ramsden**, and **Penn Murfee** jam to **Band Perry** in

study hall, and **James Higgins** ran train on **Miller** in an easter egg hunt. **McKay Proctor**'s twitter is madvillain76. **William Yang** stayed awake in history class, and **Trip Adams** beat his brother in the 400 O_O

Clint Smith beat me in math this quarter, **Mohammad Azamtarrhian** is mad at me and has no news, and **John Garrett** refuses to quit and is looking forward to another year of scout team. **Sal Neglia** fell over a chair, and **Jack Rhodes** called him a goober.

The biggest news, of course, is that our boy **Sam Waitt** is now a licensed driver! Woohoo! Even though this happened a couple of weeks ago, I thought it deserved to be in here. **Sam Turner** and **Patrick Moody** are writing a book dedicated to **Jake Simon**'s and **Bradley Harcastle**'s lives.

Roll Red.



Freshmen distracted by nice spring weather

By Wells Hamilton
Staff Writer

For MBA's freshmen the 4th quarter is a period of great academic decline, as the weather warms up and calls like a Siren the 9th-grader away from his duties.

The end of the third quarter brought an influx of freshman to the PL, and such scholars as **Marty Poe**, who just missed the PL, believe that they should still be able to get notes to the library. **Justin Yoon**, however, is less than pleased with non-PL'ers in his study hall.

Several important elections for the freshman, like Best Boy and Founders' Day Racer, were held recently, proving definitively that the freshman class is incapable of a serious election.

Perfect child **Harrison Davis** is favored for Best Boy, but a good many votes were cast for **Sam Stallings**, who is unfortunately an illicit candidate.

A great many radicals (**Nick Trogon**) believed that **John Yoder** should have been able to run in the Founders' Day Race, despite the fact his ankles prohibit him from



Freshman Travonte Easley appears to hide his face on Founder's Day. Don't be so ashamed, Travonte, you put up a good fight! Photo courtesy of Mr. Jamie Tillman.

reaching anywhere near the top speeds of racers like ultimate choice **Travonte Easley**. Unfortunately the freshmen weren't able to pull off the win this time. Varsity Lacrosse player **Samuel Bamigboye** eagerly awaits his turn to run in the race, although he will not be able to run with a stick in his hand.

Rowing seems to be attracting a great

many ex-lacrosse players, such as **Nick Boney**. Perhaps he is only posing to be a rower, whereas diehards like **Joe Werthan** actually believe in the sanctity of the sport.

Speaking of sports, tennis gained some unprecedented attention when new tennis courts opened and enticed many freshmen away from studying for their 7th

and 8th period classes. These young miscreants chose instead to watch the red giant **Wilson Vaughn** take on the Baylor kids. **Tejas "Iceman" Reddy** showed his support for **Tarun Mallepeddi** by showing up and being chill.

Breaking news: newly-elected class secretary and Lax water-boy **Ben Yahnian** finally discovered what *buckwild* means. His use of the word prompted an intervention by Dr. Tarkington into his powerful and cogent speech.

Other speech highlights were **Chippy Evan**'s riveting speech for student council, in which he kept one hand in his pocket the entire time and never raised his eyes from the sheet of notebook paper he was carrying.

Jack Thompson clinched a second term on the Student Council, renewing his confidence after a crushing defeat in the freshman speech contest. **Cal "a good guy" Fisher** clinched his second term on the Honor Council by poise alone.

Sam Pinsky, as well as several other freshman, were disappointed in the Predators recent performance. **Alec McDowell** still thinks that there is a team called the Colorado Hurricanes.

Juniors ready for end, love to emulate Usain Bolt

By Scott Dalton
Staff Writer

Coming down the homestretch of our junior year, everyone in the class of 2012 has collectively begun what is the first known record of a “junior slide” at MBA (exception: try-hards...**Bryan Oslin**). In fact, **Cayce Ortale** decided that school was no longer important in the third quarter, hence his still incomplete third-quarter grade in Mr. Tillman’s class...don’t think we don’t see you, **Harry Lee Woosley**. Speaking of not trying hard, **Paul Brazil**.

James Kay deserves to have an entire paragraph devoted to him, but he simply gets highlighted for being the star in the Nashville Ballet Company’s production of “The Nutcracker.” His co-star will be a fourth-grade girl who will show up in curlers every day at school that week. On the topic of hair curlers, a petition is going around for the re-instatement of **Noah Fardon**’s massive afro. If you see Noah, embarrass him for not having sick flow like **David Arteaga**.

Let’s take a quick minute to send out an R.I.P. to the recently not-single men of the junior class, as we say goodbye to some of our loyal bros who have now indeed been cracked by the whip. **Matthew Davidson** recently acquired a girlfriend that some might call something of a backward “gem,” and we are beaming with pride. Matthew has certainly raised the bar for gingers everywhere... **Jamie Bradshaw**, **J-MAC**, and **Blake Schmidt** (not too soon).

Henry Richardson finally got himself a woman; we figure her name must be Misty or else she would not be able to tame such a Pokémon. Hats off to **Chris Meluch** for recently becoming Facebook Official with a fine young lady who will undoubtedly send Chris to school with fantastic baked goods for all his bros.



Robert, Logan, and Harry are dumbfounded when Dr. Carro snapped this candid pic of them looking at contraband on their computers.



Scott Dalton, John Mark Bellet, and Daniel Peters confirm the theory that no matter time or place, some junior is striking the Usain Bolt pose. David Arteaga, however, is staging a peaceful protest of the trend, preferring the glare and frown look.

Eric Owings is now going steady with a dandy young woman who is “Eric’s date,” according to **Logan Standard**. **Warren “Pretty Eyes” Lipscomb** continues to exert far too many joules trying to dodge the hoards of women that flock to him in public places. **Warren** and **William Reames** share such a predicament and can often be found playing guitar inside dark and lonely places.

According to **Wills Brooks**, we should all kill ourselves when we turn 50 so we don’t drain the country’s resources because we will all be wastes of space. Thus, **Conry Miler** has thrown down the gauntlet for a cage match to the death against **Wills**...in 2043. It should be noted that **John Mitchell** will be there dressed as a Tibetan monk. With John’s new love for Physics and soft things, it is no surprise that he is now the class’s “most likely to become a Tibetan monk.”

John Mark Bellet will now be referred to only as **Il Duce** which is Italian or something for “the leader” or “a big dump,” **Karthik Sastry** is still working on the translation. **Daniel Bellet**, subsequently, will be called the **Fuhrer**, or, as many will come to know him, “the farther.”

Daniel Peters has continued to play Super Smash Bros every night for the last 6 years. I am guilty of joining in for 5 of the last 6. **Jamie Joyce** also tends to play some smash when he isn’t busy realizing that waitresses at Blue Coast Burrito will fool you with their devilishly good looks and less than satisfactory demeanor and attitudes.

In other news, **Gray Curtis** has officially become a verb meaning “to enter into a mental rubix cube-like state.” For example, **Jhamall Wright** was totally Gray Curtised when he found out that **Blake Bars** was being recruited by Stanford and Vanderbilt. Needless to say, **Thomas Forcum** is always being Gray Curtised.

Bros, as we come days closer to graduating this senior class, our contributions to the school are becoming more and more unparalleled by the day. Simply by **Jack Beckner**’s winning of the Founder’s Day race, home streams alive for what was supposed to be “MBA’s worst class in history,” a direct quote from a man in our 8th grade year who is no longer among the ranks of MBA disciplinarians (is August too soon?).

All other classes, take note that the Class of 2012 is now unbelievably dominant in the arts, taking **What Up**, **English**, **Boy Named Banjo**, **Endada Arts Festival**, **The FCA Band** (duh), ridiculously talented actors (**Hunter Woolwine**, **John Elam** and company) into consideration. Oh, and don’t forget to tremble in your boots when you see **Aaron Simonis** and his crew team get into singlets and row a boat down a river. Not to mention how much talent the cross country team has. Long story short: get ready for an upcoming year of state championships in obscure sports and the arts.



MBA students do well at Latin Quiz Bowl

By Jake Simons
Staff Latin Scholar

Sophomores Jake Simons and Kevin Wang attended the Tennessee Junior Classical League State Convention on Friday, April 9, where they competed in academic tests and Certamen, Latin Quiz Bowl.

Ribbons were awarded to the top five scorers in each academic category. Jake and Kevin competed in the Latin 3 division and received a combined seven ribbons.

Jake took 3rd place in Roman History, 3rd in Latin Literature, 4th in Ancient Geography and 5th in Vocabulary. Kevin placed 2nd in Latin Derivatives, 4th in Vocabulary and 5th in Grammar.

This MBA team of two qualified for the top Certamen group, seeded sixth out of 30 teams. This seeding placed them in a tough first match against the team seeded number one.

While they didn’t make the finals, they’re looking forward to another try next year.

Left: Logan Standard shows off his 2nd Amendment right to a pair of bear arms...or a bear head.



What Up, English shows off their ability to scuba in all situations. Get some pants, boys.



Boy Named Banjo performs in assembly as a preview for Endada. Together with What Up, English (left) they prove that the Class of 2012 rocks in all situations.

Senior shares his erudite thoughts on health care

By John Wyse
Staff Snark

Like a small bone in a Sage barbecue sandwich, **Wilson Parker** volunteering in a homeless shelter, or that last cookies-'n-cream egg in **Ms. Raines'** jar, hidden deep in the heart of the MBA campus lately is the undeniable presence of the senior slide.

In fact, **Marc Giguere** has not turned in a single assignment in months. From daily naps in the quad to assassination games to **Michael Mappes** stakeouts, seniors have been finding lots of ways of entertaining themselves. With spring break and prom behind us, college looms closer each day. Senior year is starting to wind down, but not without a few good stories to show for it. As resident expert **Walton "spoonhandler" Macey** learned in APES, "The early bird gets the worm, but the early worm gets to go on a high-flying adventure right before it gets killed." Or something like that.

Spring break proved to be as infamous as ever. After spending a torturous amount of time in the Nashville airport, the London trippers finally made it across the pond. **Eddie Seay** wanted to tack on an extra trip down under, but his bro **Matthew** convinced him that he was trying to do too much.

In Jamaica, **Jarvis Werkhaven** played a crazy game of paintball, while up-and-coming filmmaker **Chase Lovelace** tried not to lower his standards. Spring break got the best of some of the class of '11, though. Rumors of an infamous "brocuzzi" flowing with muscle milk and filled to the brim with huge pecks and cheez whiz have surfaced but are yet to be confirmed. Even our own **Ben Coode** was taken aback when he discovered the actual ages of his former beach friends in Florida.

In other news, **Bradley Worthington** has been beaming ever since he landed a Brooks Brothers modeling job and the role of "shirtless construction worker enjoying a lollipop" in his cousin **Zachary Allan's** music video for his next summer anthem, "The Handy Candyman." **Chase Pruett** is having a hot tub installed with a personal underwater breathing apparatus. **Hunter Ractliffe** disappointed the masses when his mixtape was tardy for its 4/20 drop date. Not to be outdone, **Clay Garrett** is planning the release of his own heart-felt rendition of "O Canada." When I asked him if he thought it would make it to radio, he replied simply, "swag."

In sporting news, **Ryan Hill**, **Michael Peters**, and **Andrew Powell** helped break the MBA record in the 4x1600m relay by almost 45 seconds. **Mason Foote** continues to have the best walk-up song on the baseball team; sadly, however, it has not yet drawn **Mackinnon** to a game.

Soccer, lacrosse, and tennis seniors are well on the way to making a post-season run, as well. Predictably, **Mason Kirkpatrick** was held scoreless in the faculty basketball game. In his defense, though, **Wentao** was being *quite* a ball hog. In more obscure activities, **Partha Reddy** is starting a cup-stacking career. I also assume **Hayes** has caught a fish recently.

Seniors also have some big goals for the future. **Alex Hunt**, **Miller Higgins**, and **Tyler Franks** are all competing to be "that guy" at the next Buckfest. **Van East's** plan to attend Baylor was put in limbo after another of his battles with acute, high-five overdose was complicated by a cocaine addiction. We're all here for you, buddy. **Warren Smith** is planning on walking on with the basketball team at Furman. No

one is sure why or if Furman even has a basketball team. **Will McCaskill**, **Sam Givens**, and **Chris Sandwith** have all bought matching Texas hats and wife-beaters in the hope of becoming completely indistinguishable.

Congrats to **Connor Pagnani** on being named Harpeth Hall prom king! **D-Mac** is extra focused lately. **Cito** says "Meow." **Doug Smith** watched Tiger play 17 at the Masters. And, we are all financially independent. Free Earl. Go Preds. Roll Red.




Prom king Connor Pagnani is going to Denver to play lax next year! Spiked hair was a necessity to make the team, he says.




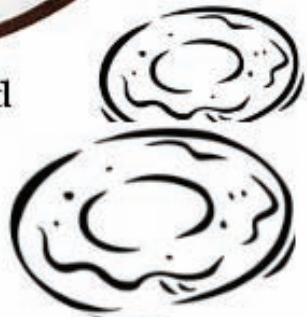
Partha Reddy and Matthew Johnson post up in London. Nice flowers, boys.



I'm not entirely sure how this applies to the senior class, but oh well, roll red!




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that allow for the bigger
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Junior reflects on Prom 2011: feels like the first time

By Roe Moore
Staff Party Animal

So there I was on Sunday afternoon riding in the car with four of my friends and we began to discuss what had happened at prom the night before and our thoughts on the whole thing. It quickly became apparent that everyone had different opinions of everything because all of us had spent our nights very differently but at the same time it was pretty much the same for everyone too.

See a dance is like a four-course meal. It starts with pictures, which is like an appetizer where everyone is excited to be there, but at the same time people really just have their minds on the main course. Pictures therefore move quickly because everyone is anxious to move on and be a little bit closer to the main event. After pictures comes dinner, which is like the soup and the salad because everyone is excited because they get to have a little bit of food before the main course to tide them over until they get to the big juicy steak that they know is coming next. So everyone enjoys this time, but it is easily the least talked about event the next day.

Here comes the dance, otherwise known as the big juicy steak. Everyone is ready to dive in and enjoy the night because it's what they came for. People love the decorations and the music and they love getting to see everyone all dressed up. Just ask Austin Blackwell who said, "My favorite part of prom was shakin' it at the dance and seeing everyone in their tuxedos."

The dance is always the part of the night that everyone loves a lot and fills everyone up except for that little bit of room everyone saves for the dessert. The after party is what everyone enjoys the most because it's when you kick back and don't worry about what is good or bad for you, and you just enjoy everything about it. This is the part of the night where everyone is having the most fun, and it lasts the longest because no one wants the night to end. So even though prom had all four courses to it like every other dance, it seemed to be a whole lot more fun than any dance I have ever been to. I think it had a lot to do with the dance itself, which was a whole lot different from every other dance I had ever been to. On further analysis, I realized that it was three main aspects to the dance which made it better. These were the band, the people, and the atmosphere.



Tortured Soul posed for a group picture with many of the Prom-goers remaining at the end of the dance.

We will first talk a little bit about the band, which was Tortured Soul, a band out of Brooklyn. They played a kind of alternative dance music that everyone seemed to really enjoy. Allison Jane Richter said, "The band rocked!" And Kevin Murphy said, "The band pumped up my soul." This was the first dance I have been to that had a band instead of a DJ, and it was incredible. Like seriously, why do people always say that they like a dance with a DJ? All that happens when you have that is people are scared to dance to all the mainstream music from the radio because they are afraid they won't be "doing the dances right."

Having a band changes everything. People dance because there isn't a "correct way" to dance and everyone just seems to have a lot more fun. I know that I am an awful dancer, but I was not scared to dance to this music because nobody knew what he or she was doing. Also, it gives you that awesome feeling of a live performance and that interaction with the band. Watching the drummer's facial expressions was one of my girlfriend's and also one of my highlights of the entire dance.

If you ask people, not everyone will say they liked the music the band played, but that is because it is not the type of music they normally listen to, which is completely understandable; however, if you asked them

if they enjoyed the dance, almost everyone said they loved it. When I asked Brandon Sauermann how he thought the band influenced the dance he said, "The band made the funky atmosphere of the dance." When I asked Natalie Mulloy the same question, she responded with "I think that the band had great dance music, and it was perfect for the theme." I know for a fact that this music is not the type of music that both of these people traditionally listen to (Brandon is more of a Fergie fan), which proves that the music does not need to always be your traditional dance music when you are at a dance.

I believe another reason that this dance was better than all the others was the people there. It wasn't just the number of people, but it was who the people were that made the prom incredible. One thing I noticed: because it was just juniors and seniors there was the fact that I had a lot more space to get my groove on because it was not very crowded. Everyone was able to show off their dance skills, or lack thereof, without constantly bumping into people or sweating through their shirts. When I asked Joseph Barry about this, he had this to say, "Well, I would say it was definitely a lot better because it wasn't as crowded with half as many people there. It also made it more fun

>> **PROM**, continued on next



Prom was big hit, band made it excellent

>> **PROM** *from previous*

to stay at the actual dance.” With not having the underclassmen there, the atmosphere was much more relaxed and enjoyable for everyone.

When the freshman and sophomores are there, they tend to be a little tense for a few reasons.

One, they are trying not to embarrass themselves in front of the upperclassmen so they do not do much hardcore dancing and, instead, stick to the simple sway and snap.

Two, around 90% of them have trouble with the females, so they really do not know what to do while out there on the dance floor. The sway and snap returns yet again.

Three, the only dance move they know is the sway and snap. Will Narramore had this to say about not having the underclassmen at the dance, “Not having underclassmen at prom is kinda like getting to lunch 5 minutes early. It’s not nearly as crowded, and you don’t have to push annoying freshman out of the way to get to the hot ‘food’.” So now that I am an upperclassman I think all dances would be so much better if we got rid of the underclassmen. I will now be pushing for this act with the higher powers in the basement of the Ball Building.

Finally, the theme. It affects the music, the way people dance, and, really, just the mood that everyone is in. When we were all first trying to think of a cool prom theme, I heard some awesome ideas, which got me really pumped up, and then I heard the band on YouTube. I have always had a thing for 70’s and 80’s dance music, so I know we were going to have to do something with that as the theme. Then Dobbs said it perfectly, 70’s Soul Train.

It was the perfect idea.

I know it was not anything super exciting or anything that had to do with the popular cultural icons of today, like Lady Gaga or Harry Potter, but it was perfect for us. At an all-boys school no one really gets really excited and into the theme for prom, but this year everyone seemed to be really excited about it because it was something that everyone agreed on because it went perfectly with the band. This excitement transferred into the building of the set, which was one of the coolest sets MBA has ever had. It had the colors. It had the perfect dance silhouettes. It had the lights. It was just awesome. As people walked in,



they were just blown away, and then when the band started to play, everyone knew how perfect the entire set up was. I decided to get a woman’s take on how we did with the decorations and Marion Cox had this to say, “I was really proud of the decorations considering they’re boys.” Another female observation came from Jessie Davidson who had this to say, “I really liked the backdrop with the 70s silhouettes. It was creative and tied in well with the theme.” Obviously with the leadership of the great Mr. Morrison, the prom set was incredible.

Going into prom I knew it could not be like just any other school dance, but I was not sure what could possibly make it different. At first, I thought it was going to be because I was wearing a tuxedo and the girls were going to have long dresses. I quickly realized at pictures that the attire was not going to be a huge factor in the fun or experience, so I did get a little nervous. Once I walked into the door of the theater and saw the set, the band, and everyone dancing, I knew that this was what was going to make this night stand out against all the others. Everyone had so much fun at this year’s prom. Grey Wallace said prom was “a total blast, it was crazy!” and Decoursey Beach, who had a date imported here from Mississippi, said, “Prom was fun-zone 2 da max.” The people who built the set, got the band, and worked on all the administrative details need to be given more credit for the fabulous job they did on making this a night that everyone will always remember. I know I really enjoyed my four-course meal at this year’s prom, and I feel that I can say the same for everyone else who enjoyed this great event.



SCIENCES: Wilson Grants go to science students

By Davis Lovvorn
Staff Writer

In 2009, the Wilson family began a program providing grants for MBA's language students to travel to the countries which speak the language being studied.

Within the last few months, the Wilson family has made yet another generous donation to the MBA community. This donation is earmarked for science students. The Wilson Science Grants will provide money for students to research various science topics.

The students receiving the first set of grants are **Jordan Pugh** (NC State, engineering), **Robert Hoover** (Penn State,

architecture), **DeCoursey Beach** (Vanderbilt, PAVE), **Ford Saunders** (Vanderbilt, PAVE), **Hamilton Millwee** (Boston U.), **Christopher Byrne** (Vanderbilt, VUMC), **John Triplett** (Clemson U., science and engineering), and **Christopher Burrus** (U. of Michigan, engineering).

Commander Carr, chairman of the science department, was generous enough to sit down with *The Bell Ringer* and give more details on these grants.

BR: What is the main focus of these grants?

PC: The Wilson Science Grants allow students to perform research on various topics over the summer at prestigious institutions. Some examples of institutions are

Vanderbilt, Baylor, and Boston University.

BR: What can students do at Vanderbilt?

PC: Various science courses are offered, such as medicine, engineering, and biological technology through the program PAVE. For one month students can learn and research at college and, in a way, get used to college life.

BR: A marine biology trip is one result of these grants. Can you tell us a little about it?

PC: Mr. Chenery is going to take around six 9th-grade students to the University of Southern Mississippi and its Gulf Coast Research Laboratory. They will investigate the oil spill damage there. The

9th-graders will go on a research vessel for two of the days and will use probes to look for subsurface oil. The trip is free, except for small fees like souvenirs and snacks.

BR: Are there any other trips available?

PC: Mr. Spiegl next year is going to take 2 or 3 students to the University of Wyoming to go on a dinosaur dig.

BR: So, besides the group trip to Mississippi, how many students will receive a grant this summer?

PC: Nine students will receive individual grants this summer. The grant program is a starter program, so over time the science department will figure out which trips are worthwhile and which are not.

MATHEMATICS: Merit marks MBA math students

By Davis Lovvorn
Staff News Gatherer

The math department has had an exciting third quarter. From state championships to national mathletes, MBA has done it all. Mr. Golenor was available for comment on the math department's astounding success.

BR: Can you tell me about the Interscholastic Math League success?

MG: The MBA mathletes made a big surge in the Interscholastic Math League. We placed 1st in Statistics, 2nd in Calculus, 1st in Algebra I, and 1st in Algebra II. It was truly a great showing.

BR: How did the recent AMC competitors perform?

MG: Two students, **Hunter Tidwell** and **Mitchell Shope**, qualified for the national AIME test, which has already been taken. They demonstrated tremendous execution and effort.

BR: The state math competition (TMTA) was on Tuesday, April 19th. How did MBA students fare against the best in the state?

MG: Our students did extremely well in the state math contest. We sent 57 boys, and there were numerous high finishers, including four champions and three perfect papers.

In Algebra I we had six of the top ten finishers: **Tony Ding** and **Alvin Zhang** finished 1st and 2nd, respectively, while **Cole Campbell**, **Michael Milam**, **Thomas**

Marosz, and **John Litchfield** were 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th.

In Geometry **Ben Barton** was 7th and **Tristan Chari** was 9th.

In Algebra II **Sam Hurd** finished in a tie for 2nd. **Jake Macey** was 4th, with **Chris Habermann** and **Tarun Mallipeddi** tied in 5th place. **Ferris Bailey** ended up 9th.

As for Statistics, we proved almost unbeatable, gaining 8 of the top 10 spots. **Adam Bowman** finished in 1st with a perfect score, and **David Arteaga**, **Hunter Tidwell**, and **Kevin Wang** finished in a tie at 2nd place, with near-perfect scores. **Chris Sandwith** was 5th, **Tom Bu** and **Bradley Long** tied for 6th, and **Andrew Karpos** finished in 10th place.

We were just slightly less success-

ful In Pre-Calculus, as MBA took six of the top 10 places. **Karthik Sastry** finished 2nd, **Zach Chen** 4th, **Gray Curtis**, 5th, **Rett Hooper** 7th, and **Myles Anderson** and **Austin Doebler** tied for 10th.

Mr. Compton's Calculus students did very well. **Carter Callaway** and **Joe Scherrer** tied for first with perfect scores, while **Mitchell Shope** finished in 3rd, **Stephen Bedard** and **Will Norton** tied for 5th. **Ryan Hill** gained 7th place, with **Paul Van Pernis** in 8th and **Jack Keller** 10th.

BR: Is there a *sheriff* update?

MG: The *sheriff* proves to be an elusive title to garner and even more demanding to retain.

ENGLISH: Mr. Kelly leads MBA to embrace poetry

By John Mellow
Staff Writer

April was National Poetry Month. This was a fact that I did not know in March. I certainly do now, thanks to an aggressive campaign launched by the English Department this past month to highlight poetry on the Hill.

First, the department moved the Rascoe Bond Davis Poetry Contest so that the winners would be announced in April instead of being announced with all the other awards at the end of the year.

Not many things can convince most students to write poetry outside of school like the chance to win money. **Scott Black-**

well took home the cash prize for his poem "The Tables Re-turned." He and the second- and third-place winners, **Lucas Littlejohn** and **McLean Hudson**, were invited to read and work on their poems with visiting author Brad Watson.

In addition, Mr. Kelly directed the first annual and much-heralded-every-morning-in-announcements Poetry Poll Contest. Students, teachers, parents, and alumni were all invited to send in their favorite poem.

The winner of the poll was Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken," a poem which all students in America learn at some point in their school careers. Out of those who sent in this poem, **Warren Smith** was

randomly selected to receive a \$50 prize.

April has drawn to a close, but we look forward to next year, when we can again indulge in poetry and cash rewards.



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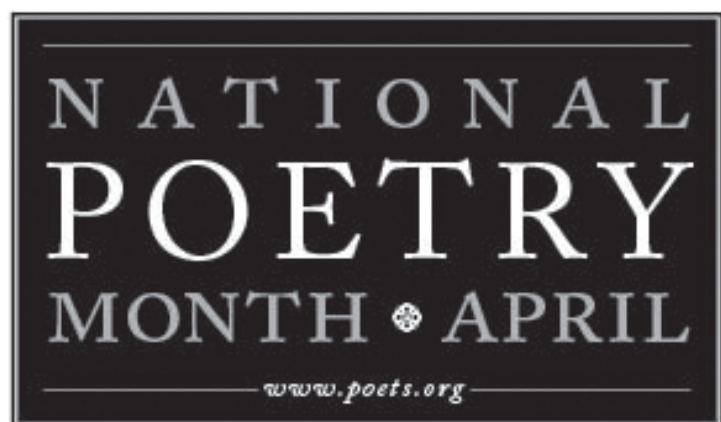
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Seay and Norton get ready for their new roles



Dr. Rick Seay is a great friend to all students. He will be the new Director of the High School next year. Photo courtesy of the current Director of the High School and the similarly lovable Mr. Jamie Tillman.



CPT Will Norton will focus on the social aspects of the high school as Dean next year.

>> NEW FROM P1

Mr. Norton will supervise the social aspects of high school life. His role will include leadership development for class officers, management of day-to-day discipline, and supervision of clubs and activities. He also plans to keep up many of Mr. Tillman's traditions, such as running the annual Carnival and snapping tons of pictures every day, though it



is unclear whether he will send us sixteen-line poems about wearing coat and tie for Totomoi assemblies.

New MBA faculty member Mr. Kevin Mawae will move into the position vacated by Mr. Norton as Dean of Students for the 11th and 12th Grades. Both he and Mr. Ronnie McMahan, Dean of Students for the 9th and 10th grades, will be working closely with Mr. Norton to manage student affairs.

The new partnership will also include a closer relationship with the Junior School and its Director, Mrs. Fran Stewart. "I don't like the perception that the 7th and 8th grades are just in one building over there, away from everyone else," Dr. Seay remarked as he gestured toward Massey through his office window. "We need a more cohesive model, because MBA is really one school.

The three of us—Mr. Norton, Mrs. Stewart, and I—will really work together on all student affairs."

The transition to the new system has already begun, and will continue into the summer. Throughout the year, Mr. Norton has been studying the technique of organizational maestro Mr. Tillman (and presumably honing his skills with the camera). He hopes to have finished the process by graduation. This summer there will be numerous joint meetings between Dr. Seay, Mr. Norton, and Mrs. Stewart as the three finalize their plans for the take-over.

Mr. Tillman will be remaining on The Hill as a teacher and counselor. "Thankfully for the school, Mr. Tillman is just moving into the Carter building," noted Mr. Norton, "so he will be accessible to answer questions

when they arise."

Mr. Norton is excited about the opportunity to work more closely with the development of students. "Much of my focus for the position will be promoting programs and opportunities that will develop student character," he said. "It is my firm belief that if students have a firm foundation of character, they will be equipped to handle the seasons of life with fortitude."

Dr. Seay, too, sees a bright future: "Having almost 150 years of tradition provides an incredibly strong foundation for the school, but at the same time we're still looking at innovation and new strategies for education. We're in a unique position, and I hope we can keep MBA one of the premier schools in the nation."

New tennis courts look as good as MBA's game on them

>> COURTS FROM P1

confusion with the construction and the finishing of the last five courts, only three courts were available for play, so the match was a six-and-a-half hour marathon (from 12:45 pm to 7:15 pm) between the top high school teams in the state. After losing two of the three doubles matches to lose the doubles point, the Big Red fought back valiantly in singles, with five of the six matches going into three sets.

At #1, Palmer Campbell wore down his opponent until the foe cramped too badly to continue and was forced to pull out. Davis Thrailkill and Russell Anderson at #2 and #3 fought their way to third-set victories. With the score now 3-1 in favor of the Big Red, we only had to win one match out of the last three, which included Andrew Karpos, Andrew Graham, and Kalyan Chaldavada, respectively #4, #5, and #6.

The deciding win came from sophomore Graham, who defeated his opponent

6-4 in the third set to clinch the overall match. The victory against Baylor was a spectacular way to start off the new Big Red tennis facility. We would like to thank all of you students who visited the match during the school day, as you were incredibly necessary for our being able to pull out the win.



LANGUAGE: National Latin Exams were hard this year

By Sam Weien
Staff Writer

As March rolls around each year, students get their minds set on a spring sojourn. People begin daydreaming of double-blacks diamonds and soft, warm sands.

But, just before these escapades provide rest and diversion, all Latin students must take (cue dramatic music) the National Latin Exam. These standardized tests are given to all Latin scholars ... and eighth-graders.

These forty-question, multiple-choice tests are given by the American Classics Association for each level of the language, and these tests are the most prestigious Latin aptitude tests across the world. Students from at least eight countries sit for the test.

MBA perennially does well on these tests. This year, MBA also did well, though the Latin I and the Latin II tests were considerably tougher than in past years. This year the gold medal cut-off on the Latin II exam was 33, three points lower than in previously years.

Two Latin I students (Tarun Mallipetti and John Goodrum) received perfect papers. In Latin III, four students, Kevin Wang, George Swenson, Jake Simons, and Timothy Bulso matched this perfection.

Out of the 287 Big Red students who took a National Latin Exam, 202 received awards. Of these award-winners, 86 students received a gold medal, and fifty were presented with a silver medal.

To show the difficulty of the exams, I have included two questions from the Latin II test below.

Q: With the help of Pegasus the monster Chimera was killed by?

(only 43 % of MBA Latin II students got this question right.)

A. Orpheus B. Bellerophon C. Achilles D. Jason

Q: Rōmānī fābulam dē Caesare, _____, in scholā legēbant.

(only 42% of MBA Latin II students answered this one correctly.)

A. ducem clārum B. dux clārus C. ducis clārī D. duce clārō

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Arts festival *Endada* huge success last weekend

Mastermind Jamie Joyce gives event backstory

By Jamie Joyce
Staff Arts Writer

While many enjoyed *Endada* last weekend, few understand how exactly the festival came to fruition. It all began in May of 2010 when Noah Fardon, Preston Evans, and I all decided that we wanted to put on a festival. Graduation was steadily approaching and our exams and sophomore year on the Hill were coming to an end.

However, not having any experience in planning any sort of event, especially not one on this scale, we realized that an undertaking such as this was easier said than done.

We had never heard of MBA ever having something like what we were envisioning – Cellophony (our annual musical benefit for the W.O. Smith School) was close but even that didn't quite encapsulate what we were picturing.

We wanted to have a festival that would entice people from all over the area to pay our beautiful campus a visit – a festival that would not only feature members of the MBA community but play host to some of the most revered and popular artists in Nashville.

Perhaps just as importantly, we also wanted to prove that MBA, despite the clear emphasis placed on our athletics, was just as involved and talented in the arts as any other school or institution claimed to be.

However, we had quickly decided that if MBA was going to produce something like this, then at one point in our celebrated

144 years we would have done it already. The idea was quickly abandoned with summer looming on the horizon.

Luckily, one of us was still convinced that it was a good idea. Noah decided on a whim to go ahead and shoot Mr. Tillman an email, not expecting any response in particular but just letting him know about our big idea and seeing if he had any thoughts. Low and behold, it turned out the administration was much more interested than once thought.

After some emailing back and forth, a meeting was set with Mr. Tillman to talk over our vision for the festival. Originally we were more focused on the musical side of the festival. We wanted to invite bands from all around the city and have them play at MBA, charging a modest entry fee and donating the proceeds to a charity.

But, Mr. Tillman and the rest of the arts department brought up a good point: essentially what we were doing was creating another Cellophony, except with some outside bands – there was nothing that made it that unique compared to the talent show or even Zeitgeist at USN.

So, after some deliberation and a few meetings at the beginning of our junior year, it was decided that our festival, in addition to hosting great bands from around Nashville, would also feature a myriad of artists and performers, such as graffiti artists, glass blowers, sculptors, improv groups, spoken word, and painters. The size of our little festival was growing rapidly. We were going to need some help.

As the reality of what our festival was becoming began to sink in, we decided to

call on some close friends to make a committee. Recruiting the best MBA has to offer, we put Aaron Ardisson and Vaughn Hunt in charge of getting artists to be interested in setting up booths, Harry Woosley and Logan Standard in charge of getting food vendors, Jonathan Reilly in charge of spoken word, Decoursey Beach in charge of poster and t-shirt design, and Chris Hooks in charge of advertising. Preston, Noah, and I would oversee the entire festival and take on the job of getting bands to play.

With our newly formed committees' help, along with our extremely helpful teacher-sponsor Ms. Hollifield, and our street team, which includes the likes of Willard Logan, Cooper Thomas, and David Arteaga, we began working tirelessly to make sure that this was the most successful festival MBA had ever seen.

One meeting in particular stands out in my mind – the meeting at which we actually decided on the name for the festival. We all met one Monday night in the Gibbs Room over pizza. There were many different ideas. A favorite of ours was Brighton Arts and Music Festival (in reference to the old Brighton Road) – spelling out BAMF. Although we would have loved to go with that name, for obvious reasons we had to choose another. Some others that were mentioned included “Timbre” and “Rumpus.” It was actually Mr. Womack, though, who recommended the name we finally chose. He recalled an old sculpture that used to rest on the MBA campus in between the debate building and the library. Unfortunately, the piece of abstract art was reportedly torn down by mistake. We thought that naming

the festival after the sculpture would capture its essence – proving that we are, in fact, a very artistically involved school, despite what some may say.

Eventually everything started to come together. The festival included three stages: Impossible Germany, Unlikely Japan, and the Paschall Theater, with sound graciously provided by Clay McDonald and 615 Productions.

Outside, the first two stages featured local Nashville favorites such as Big Surr and Fox Fun along with great MBA acts like Stan vs. Wild, Boy Named Banjo, and, of course, What Up, English.

The Paschall Theater featured performances from the likes of Kirkland Mawae and his dance team (or as I like to call them “Kirkland and the Mawaettes”), Mazel Prov! (who were hilarious), and the newly installed Semi-Dead Poets Society.

Special guest Sebastian Jones, reportedly one of the best young slam poetry performers in the country and a favorite among the Youth Speaks Poets, also featured his work.

Then, surrounding the Sloan Quad were thirty plus artists, such as Hatch Show Print, Glass Blowers, and the Lost Boys Foundation, all with their own booths, showing off their impressive work. To cap it all off, delicious food was provided by such great vendors as the Grilled Cheeserie, Mountain Jim's Icecream, Seattle's Best of Belle Meade, Firefly Grille, Fleur-de-Lis, the Kettle Corn Guy, and the Bang Candy Company. Seriously... sorry if you missed it, it was a blast. But, have hope, there is always next year!

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Radio station WRVU is going down, not without fight

By Noah Fardon
Staff Writer

There is something beautiful about the unknown. Driving down Highway 100 in the pitch black of the pre-dawn one humid summer night, I was fortunate enough to realize just that.

Made anxious by the silence in my car and the long stretch of empty pavement that lay before me, I flipped on the radio, something I rarely used to do.

I immediately heard the low hum of radio static. It seemed that all the DJs had gone home for the night. Turning the knob ever so slightly, I made my way from channel to channel, hoping to land on something, anything. Suddenly, I was greeted by the soulful warmth of Junior Parker's "Funny How Time Slips Away." The guitar rang clear as it wound its way about the thick bass, lazily pacing back and forth under Junior Parker's smoky smooth vocals.

The next eight minutes disappeared into a blissful eternity, the kind that only "perfect" songs can provide. So blown away by the tune, I stayed tuned to find out the DJ and station that I had so luckily stumbled

upon. "Welcome back. This is Big Poppa's Underground Hour. That was Junior Parker. This is WRVU."

Junior Parker's tune, a sweet and humorous slice of soul from the 1960's, made me realize that there is still so much beautiful music unknown to me. As a result, I find myself, a year and a half later, still listening to Vanderbilt's college radio station, 91.1 WRVU, and I still find myself left completely speechless by the DJs week after week.

Radio is, in fact, not as dead as it may have seemed. In fact, Doyle Davis of the nationally renowned Grimey's Record Store here in Nashville informed me that "a recent study by Edison Research showed that 51% of consumers aged 12-24 still rely on radio as the medium most often used for music discovery. That tops other sources including friends (46%), YouTube (31%) and social networking sites (16%)."

WRVU in particular is worth saving. According to Doyle, who previously worked on WRVU's staff and currently runs a radio program on Nashville's Lightning 100, WRVU has become "the only true alternative to commercial radio in Nashville."

He may very well be right. While local listeners often praise the likes of 100.1 WRLT, "Lightning 100," no one can claim to match the diversity and dedication of WRVU. The entire project is run entirely by students, who pour their lives bit by bit into the station and its each and every program, making the entire listening experience more intimate and personal.

This pivotal player in the past 59 years of Nashville music history, however, may be seeing its final days.

Since WRVU is not in the financial dumps, and if it still receives its share of dedicated listeners on a daily basis, why would such an influential and impressive station be slipping through the cracks?

According to savewrvu.wordpress.com, the station's official support site, Vanderbilt's VSC board decided in September of 2010 to sell the station's broadcasting license. Why? No one can really be sure. The more heated rumors suggest financial motives or attempts at creative restriction. No matter the cause, the real question is



The campaign to save WRVU appears to be working in vain.

how can we prevent this from happening?

There is no guarantee that any sum of people can change the minds of the Board, but there is nothing to keep music fans hopeful, and there are two ways that you can help WRVU:

-1) Turn on your radios! Listen up!

-2) Shoot a message to the address provided at WRVU's "Who to Lobby" Page (<http://savewrvuradio.wordpress.com/who-to-lobby/>)

For the sake of Junior Parker tunes at 1:00 A.M. on sticky summer nights, SAVE WRVU.

For full details on how to save WRVU, visit <http://savewrvuradio.wordpress.com/how-can-i-help/>

Scranton's in shambles



By Sam Weien
Staff Writer

The Cleveland Cavaliers without LeBron James. Guns and Roses without Slash. Microsoft without Bill Gates. As these examples indicate, when a talented person leaves a certain squad, the team tends to falter and fail. As Steve Carrell prepares to leave *The Office*, people are beginning to wonder how good the show will be.

To serve as a story arc, the show has brought in Will Ferrell, who is playing the roll of DeAngelo Vickers. DeAngelo is the new manager who has arrived to replace Michael Scott, played by Steve Carell.

DeAngelo is an ambitious, awkward manager who often does not like Michael's goofy traditions. So far, DeAngelo and Michael have many similarities and differences. They are both very awkward and feel that everybody loves them, but Michael likes having fun while DeAngelo is all business and does not enjoy attention. For instance, DeAngelo does not want "The Dundies", an award ceremony for the Scranton Branch, to continue, even though it is Michael's pride

and joy.

Deangelo has been received well by the rest of the office members, but they are beginning to find out that he is not as good as they originally thought he would be. Famous beet farmer Dwight Schrute, because he was not named the new manager, has already shown his hatred for DeAngelo publicly. However, Cornell graduate Andy Bernard is trying to gain favor with DeAngelo and actually supports him.

Although DeAngelo will not be in Scranton next year, the next manager will have quite a legacy to live up to. The question that is still up in the air: who will be the new manager next year at *The Office*, and will he be funny? Only time will tell.



Will Ferrell as D. Vickers.

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The Bell Ringer enjoys West End's Rumba

By Blake Burns
Staff Voluptuary

When first meeting Rumba owner, Anne C. Sheffer, one would not think that she owns five restaurants, has five college degrees, has taught high school English, and one would definitely not think that she is in her 70's. Mrs. Sheffer is a very hip lady who, when I met her just a few weeks ago, had just seen concerts by Elton John, Lady Gaga, and Katy Perry. With this youthful personality, Mrs. Sheffer knows how to do a restaurant right.

Rumba is a rum bar and Satay grill that is located at 3009 West End Avenue. Inside, the tropical atmosphere and dim lighting brilliantly adds up to the ambiance of that of a club in Miami or Cancun. Rumba is a very relaxed and casual restaurant where one feels very comfortable. The staff is also extremely friendly and very efficient with their work, which is a key factor to a superb restaurant.

At first glance, the Rumba menu can be overwhelming. There are so many options, and each one is completely different. All of Rumba's ingredients come from below the equator, providing a menu very different from so many of the restaurants most of us are used to.

For starters, one cannot go wrong with the Stuffed Peppadews, Edamole, or Tempura Haricots Verts. The Stuffed Peppadews are South African peppers stuffed with goat cheese to give two flavors that are different, yet two that greatly compliment each other.

Edamole is a classic guacamole that is infused with edamame to give it a more unique taste. This is served with tortilla chips, of course.

The most unique appetizer is the Tempura Haricots Verts. These thin green beans are breaded in a tempura breading and are served with sesame-soy sauce. These were my personal favorite.

Main courses at Rumba are second to none. The wide variety also presents flavors for each and every different palette. One could always



start with the Satay. These are grilled skewers of either chicken, shrimp, chorizo, steak, portabella, or Montego beef. These skewers are served with a medley of three dipping sauces that greatly enhance the meats.

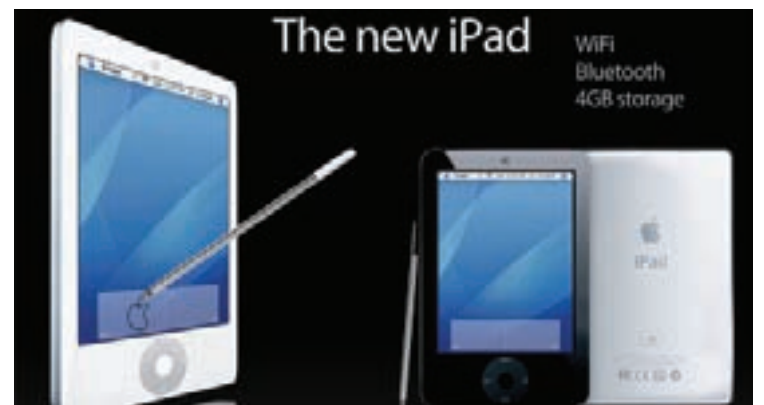
Of course one could always venture onto the wild side and try some of Rumba's more exciting dishes. Rumba features some very tasty pizzas and flatbreads that are made in house and that are very different from pizzas most of us are used to.

My personal favorite entrée at Rumba, however, are their burgers. Rumba's burgers are some of the best in town. The Rumba Cheeseburger is a classic bacon cheeseburger. With smooth Manchego cheese and crispy molasses bacon, this burger is one of the best items on the menu.

However, if one is feeling a bit more adventurous, I highly recommend the Brazilian Burger. This burger is the classic Painted Hills beef that Rumba uses. It is decorated with white cheddar cheese and.... gasp! an egg! These two flavors blend together to create an extraordinary taste that cannot be described with words.

Rumba's desserts are very good as well. Their homemade cupcakes and ice cream are sweet and decadent - a perfect ending to an excellent dining experience and to this article.

Rumba is located on West End across from Bricktops and is open from 4 pm - midnight every day and until 1AM on Friday and Saturday.



Library catches wave

By Wells Hamilton
Staff Writer

MBA's library has recently acquired a large number of Apple's newest technological masterpiece, the iPad. Many, though, are wondering if the primary use of these tablets is for the game-playing of our youngest students? Such questions and more were posed in a discussion I had with librarian Mr. Robbie Quinn.

Interestingly enough, the library's budget is split among several different functions and services the library must provide. Large portions of the budget go to the extensive range of online resources that are available through the school. Another portion is dedicated to the conversion of the school's archives into more accessible online formats. New books and the new addition of E-Books also make up a portion of the budget.

As the literary world is drawn into the bitter battle between hard-copy and digital, the library seems to be at its initial phase of what Mr. Quinn believes is an inevitable conversion to digital books. However, several problems have occurred with the transition.

First and foremost, the availability of online books is still far less than optimal. Several books have not been switched to a digital form and, thus, are only available in hard copy.

However, there are even more problems for book publishers, as written books are seemingly becoming obsolete. As a large portion of the student body is undoubtedly well-aware, most everything that is available for purchase on the internet is also available for free.

This is a possible pitfall for the publishers, as publishing was previously a lucrative business. This may force their hands in the establishment of regulations on how many times the book can be downloaded. Mr. Quinn spoke of certain companies charging a renewal fee after a certain amount of downloads. Such problems will need to be addressed if MBA is to move forward in converting its extensive literary collection to the digital form. Perhaps the allure of an extensive library of tangible books still carries more prestige than a hundred iPads.

This begs the question: will MBA be trading its bookshelves for iPads? Mr. Quinn believes the switch, although inevitable, is still a good distance in the future.

New staff of *The Bell Ringer*

2011-2012 Editorial Staff



Karthik Sastry
Editor-in-Chief

Scott Dalton
Executive Editor

John Mellow and McLean Hudson, *News Editors*

Daniel Mace, *Features Editor*

Jamie Joyce, *Entertainment Editor*

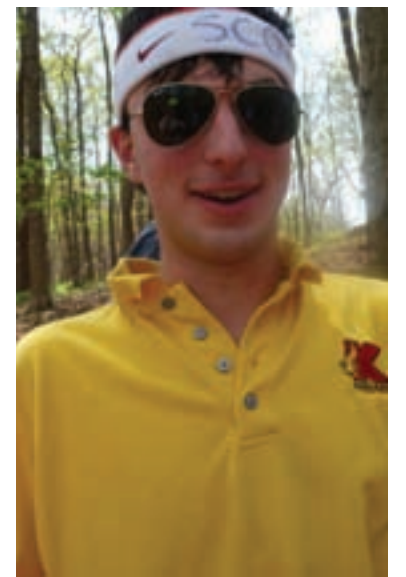
George Swenson, *Sports Editor*

McKay Proctor, *Opinions Editor*

Daniel Mace, *Business Manager*

Sam Weien, *Assistant Business Manager*

Andrew Dupuis and Parrish Preston, *Photographers*



The Strokes' *Angles* delivers superb return to form



By Tom Markham
Entertainment Editor

It's been a long time coming. On March 22nd, the elder statesmen of hipster rock finally emerged from hiatus and let the world know they were back. I speak, of course, of the Strokes.

Angles, their fourth album, has been the most anticipated release in the alt-rock scene in the past five years. The Strokes essentially defined what it meant to be "cool" in the rock music back in 2001 with their groundbreaking debut album, *Is This It*. Now, ten years, three albums, four side projects, and a couple of rehab visits later, the boys are back in town with a release that has got the industry buzzing.

First off, a disclaimer: *Angles* is not by any means the Strokes best album. Obviously that title belongs to the aforementioned classic *Is This It*. This album is, however, a very telling pulse-check of where rock music may be headed in the next few years.

Angles is the first time that all five Strokes have had songwriting input—previously the songwriting duties rested solely in the hands of frontman Julian Casablancas, and, thus, is the most diverse track-by-track sound of any Strokes effort to date.

It's also the first time the Strokes, historically a riff-rocking, guitar-based group, have incorporated the use of such instruments as synthesizers, harmonizing vocals, keyboards, and drum machines. Strokes purists may argue that this new development is a departure for the Strokes. Okay, fine. But where might we be as rock and rollers had Bob Dylan not "gone electric" back in 1965 at the Newport Folk Festival? I don't see any reason why the same logic cannot be applied to the Strokes.

The good, influential artists are the ones that can move forward with their sound in a progressive way. Casablancas himself croons on the opening track, "I'm just trying to find a mountain I can climb." It's clear these boys have been ready for quite some time now to move forward.

Within the next few paragraphs, I will explain to you why *Angles* is a tremendous step forward not only for the Strokes, but also for the music that we consider "cool" across the industry. If that weren't enough, it's also a pretty sweet listening experience.

Historically, the Strokes have been

known as the lo-fi trendy masters of underground rock, reminiscent of bands like MC5 and the Velvet Underground. Obviously classic tunes such as "Last Nite," "Reptilia," and "Someday" have defining, Strokes features, namely Casablancas' don't-give-a-damn vocal style along with the tightly wound guitar play of Nick Valensi and Albert Hammond, Jr.

The great thing about *Angles* is that these foundational elements of what make the Strokes so great are still present, but this time around, the boys have gone the next step in making that sound unique.

You see, here's what happened. After the Strokes became rulers of the indie rock world, naturally all other indie wannabees had to try out their sound. It's a great sound to emulate, but these days, it has become nothing special because no one can quite do it like the Strokes did. So, in order to rise above the general neo-Strokes din, the Strokes themselves took what they knew they did best and expanded upon it.

Take the album's first single, "Under Cover of Darkness." The rhythm guitar sounds almost exactly like their earlier hit "Last Nite," but instead of sticking to the garage-pop formula they know so well, the boys have thrown in discordant melodies, layered background vocals and a tasty verse riff that almost resembles Molly Hatchet in texture. All the while, the song is unbelievably catchy. As if looking to break the trend of post-Strokes copycat rock, Casablancas ironically sings, "Everybody's singing the same song for ten years." How prophetic.

One of the best parts about this album is its opening track, "Machu Picchu." It's perfect as an opener because it sets the tone of the whole album, as any good first track should. Here's what's key to note about "Machu Picchu": the song doesn't really sound like the Strokes, yet it's undeniably a Strokes song. It doesn't have a guitar solo (weird, I know), and the verses have a catchy yet uncharacteristic dance beat. But, in true Strokes fashion it smoothly grooves into a powerful chorus behind Casablancas' newfound actually-give-a-damn vocals. On *Angles*, it seems the chorus is the key. Pay attention to that as you listen to the album.

Let's talk briefly about the new features the Strokes have tossed into their music, noting specific tracks as we go. On "You're So Right," written by bassist Nikolai Fraiture, drummer Fab Moretti uses some technological help as a drum machine speeds through the chorus like a sparrow in a wind tunnel. This track also features the most shredding guitar solo ever found on a Strokes track. It comes out of nowhere.

On "Two Kinds of Happiness," the chorus has layers of cascading guitars almost resembling the anthemic style of U2. "Games" has a synthesizer in a *lead* role, and it performs well on a catchy hook that accompanies the vocal melody nicely. Closing track "Life is Simple in the Moonlight" is very tastefully reserved in the verses,

flowing behind booming drum fills into the catchiest and most powerful vocal chorus of the entire album.

The two heaviest-hitting tracks in my mind on this album are "Taken For A Fool," a track written by lead guitarist Nick Valensi, and "Gratisfaction," an indelibly catchy tune reminiscent of Steely Dan. I can't exactly say what makes these songs so great, but within these two tracks one can find everywhere the Strokes have been and everywhere they plan to go.

The vocals still have traces of Casablancas' unforgettable drawl, yet he stretches his voice to the ends of its range to add more power to his delivery. The guitar work is laced with perfect melodies that slide through as many tones as chameleons. They rock, they roll, they cruise, they bruise, they glide, they soar, they screech, and, most importantly, they hook the listener in. You'll just have to listen to these tracks to understand what I'm trying to say.

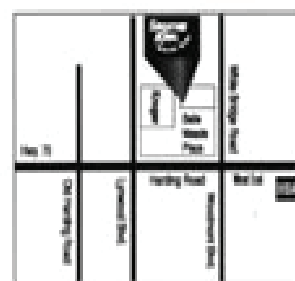
Now, before I *really* start rambling, let me bring it on home for you enthused readers. The Strokes' fourth album *Angles* is exactly what the band needed to prove their influential indie rock prowess. These guys have been trying to push the industry forward for a while now, with occasionally mixed results, but *Angles* proves that these guys can still make the beautifully catchy tunes of old while still pushing their sound forward. *Angles* seems to patch up and improve upon the flaws of the Strokes' third album, the sometimes-wobbly *First Impressions of Earth*.

It's good to see that there is still vitality in the indie scene, and make sure to note *Angles* as a touchstone for many new artists to spring from in the next few years. At the very least, I hope this article has given you a legitimate excuse to convince your parents to let you go to Bonnaroo: "But Mom! *The Strokes* will be playing there!"



Photo courtesy of RCA Records.

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Big Red Side set to contend for elusive State title

By McKay Proctor
Staff Writer

This 2011 MBA soccer team is off to a strong start, with wins against foes CPA, Hume-Fogg, and Hillsboro. At their best, the Big Red Side is dynamic and confident. The keeper is too solid, the backs are too strong, the mids are too smart, and the forwards are too fast. They exude confidence.

The energy of the team begins with the center backs. Senior Clay McDonald, the vocal leader of the defensive front, plays with bottomless hustle and determination. His counterpart at center, Paul van Pernis, plays with a quieter confidence, none the less effective. The play of Henry Lynch and William Flautt buttresses the energy of the center backs with capable play on the ball and spurts of brilliance at left and right back.

In the goal, the Red finds a real strong-point in adept senior Warren Smith. Warren brings levelheadedness in the back of a defense that, at its best, smothers opposing forwards with physicality and athleticism.

At midfield, Ford Emerson drives

the Big Red's explosive offense.

Almost any chain of passes that threatens the goal has at least one touch by the senior dynamo. That is not to say that Ford plays pretty, though he handles the ball tactfully, his largest contribution to the team comes in his willingness to sacrifice his body in all facets in the game. He flies through the air and into challenges with a single-minded tenacity that inspires a higher level of play in his teammates. His disregard for personal safety instills awe in all who witness his reckless abandon. Ford's speed and go-go gadget right leg demand attention from opposing midfielders when he is not running them over.

Senior midfielder Alex Luna's strong boot and vision makes him a threat from any distance, passing or putting a ball on goal.



Ford Emerson plays the ball high, against the backdrop of a neighborhood building.

Deakin's combination of mercurial speed and unselfish play bring a rare game-breaking quality to the line. Hayden's urgency contrasts sharply with the play of Trey Gill. He glides through the box effortlessly, leaving multiple defenders in his wake. Trey's raw talent is astounding, but his patience is truly extraordinary. Joining these dynamic underclassmen, Clay Garrett uses his broad shoulders to great effect. He bodies his way past challenges adding a hardnosed drive to the already strong line.

The element that draws me in about this team is this energy. When they play

At center mid, Chris Meluch is a gifted passer and an exceptional dribbler in traffic.

At forward, the Big Red Side finds a cast of players with varied talents. On the right side, Hayden

with confidence, there is no team in the state that can stand tall next to them. When they truly believe they can win (which should be every game), they carry themselves with an infectious confidence that only increases as their skill takes hold.

The Big Red soccer players are talented enough to take anyone at the state level. The unknown lies in motivation. As a fan, I have faith that Coach Cheevers will keep his team focused on achieving to the full extent of their ability. Please join me in cheering on the Big Red Side as they contend for a state championship.



C. Garrett shows off his imposing body.

Young MBA baseball team looks promising



Alex Kohls rips a shot into right field.

By Hayden Palm
Staff Writer

This year's baseball team has a nicely balanced lineup of 9 upper classmen and 8 lower classmen, but the widespread age difference has had little effect on the team's performance.

With a record of 15 and 6, the group is playing strong and is currently ranked first in the region.

Coach Wims attributes the team's suc-

cess to the players' camaraderie and strong senior leadership from Paul Baker, Mason Foote, Alex Hunt, Joe Riegle, and Aubrey Witherington.

The result of this outstanding leadership is evident in the performances of some of the younger players. Sharing the mound with Paul and Aubrey, junior Conry Miler and sophomore Lawson Factor lead the team in pitching with ERAs of 2.75 and 2.97 respectively, while sophomore Will Campbell and junior James Kay have been dominant at the plate, with batting averages

of .380 and .373. Collectively, the team has amassed 12 homeruns.

As the regular season now draws to a close, the squad has its sights set on the rapidly approaching post season. When asked about the team's chances at State, Joe Riegle remarked, "Yeah, I think we have a pretty good chance [of winning it all]. We're first in the region, and we've worked hard all year, so I definitely think it could happen."

The team's current standing attests to their hard work, so a win at State would be well deserved. Good luck, guys.

Two sport star Chase Owen focuses on Track/Field

By George Swenson
Staff Sports Writer

After a strong basketball season, Chase Owen looks to continue his success this spring on the track. I sat down to discuss what to expect from the track team as the season enters its final weeks.

Bell Ringer: Now that the basketball season has ended, can you summarize the season and some of the season's highlights?

Chase Owen: Overall we had a sensational basketball season. Throughout the season Coach Anglin continually stressed how tough our schedule was, and there were definitely highs and lows. My highlight, however, was our victory in the quarterfinals of the state tournament over Christian Brothers, who had previously beaten us during the regular season.

Bell Ringer: After starting the track season late, did basketball prepare you physically for your races or did you find yourself out of shape?

Chase Owen: Basketball did a great job of preparing me for track season. At most I was probably only a step or two behind everyone else, but I was able to catch up easily. Since basketball is a constant sprint up and down the court, track conditioning was an easy switch.

Bell Ringer: In what events do you plan to run, and what are some of your goals as the season comes to a close?

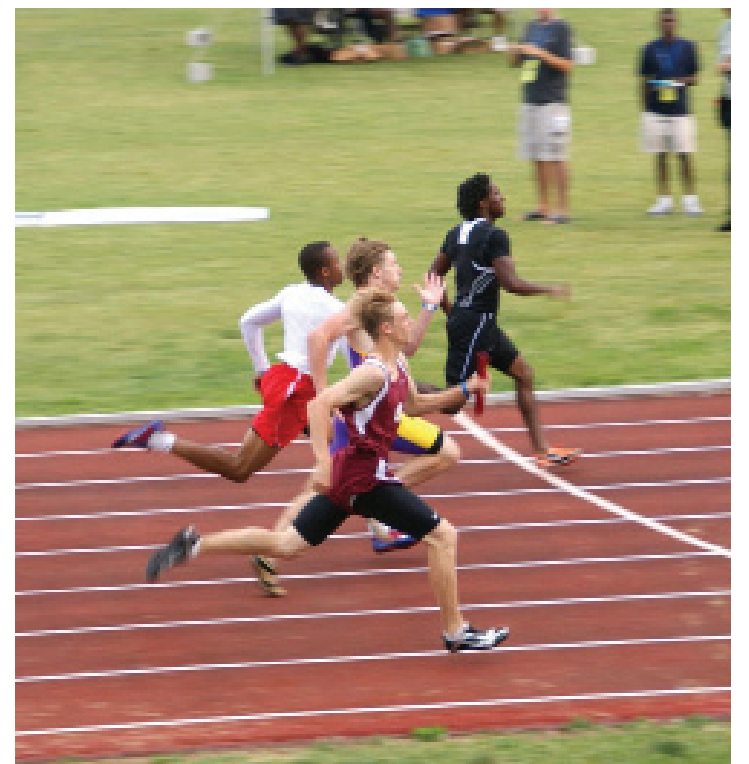
Chase Owen: By the end of the season I will be in the Long Jump, Triple Jump, 4x200, and the 4x400. Hopefully, I'll break the triple jump record of 43'11" for the third time. Additionally, I plan to shave another second off my 400m time. A rumor has been swirling about trying the 800m, but nothing is official yet.

Bell Ringer: After a 7-point loss last year in the State Meet, do you think the team has enough depth to overcome last year's defeat and capture its first state title since 2001?

Chase Owen: I think we stand a great chance. We lost only two competitors that scored in the state meet last year. The vast majority of our team is coming back, and we are only going to be stronger and faster. In order to win state, we need our distance runners to dominate, in addition to strong performances in the sprints and field events.

Bell Ringer: It is often assumed that track and field are two separate sports and that they are not related, so can you explain how the field events tie into determining the state champion?

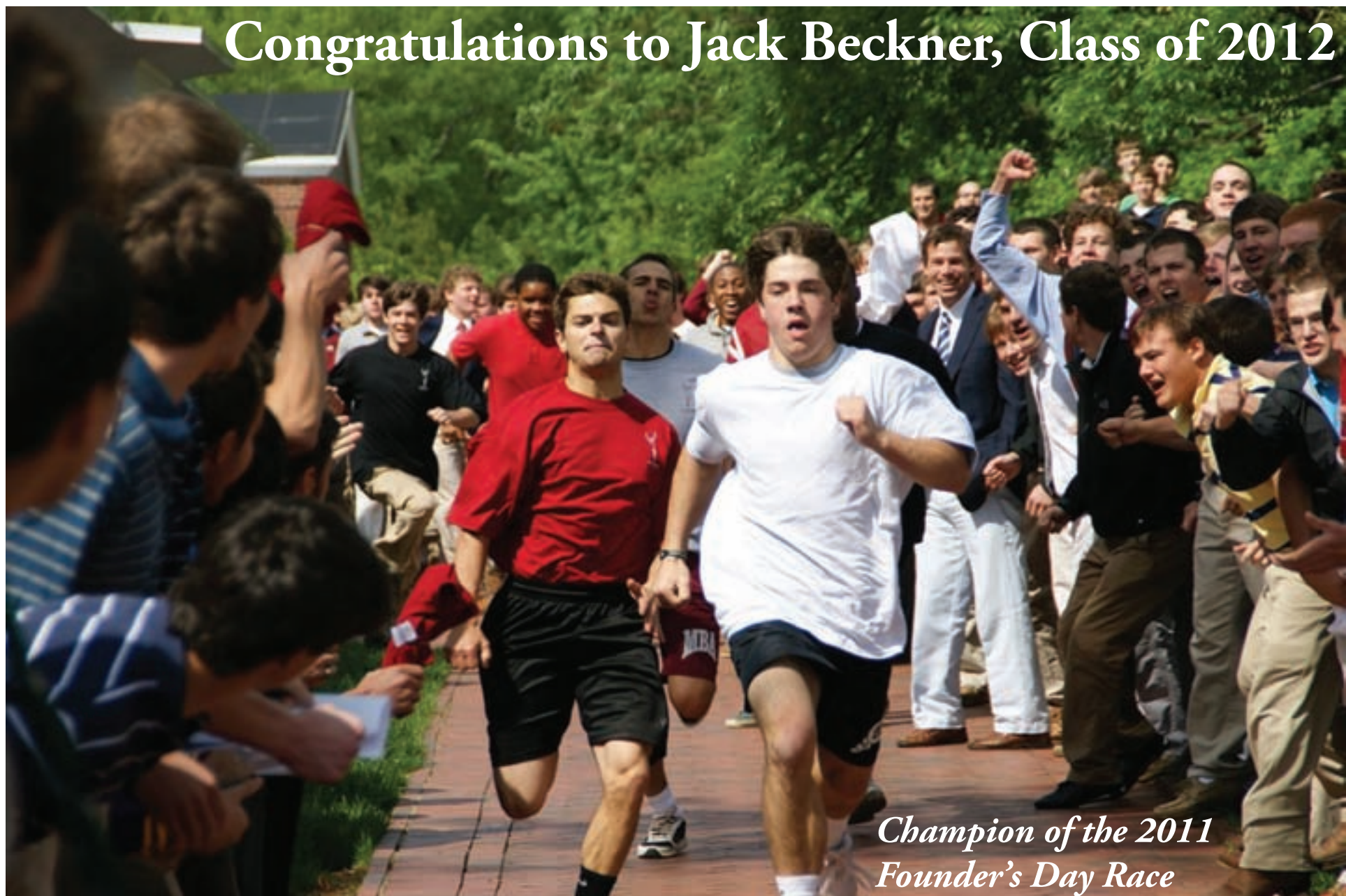
Chase Owen: The field events are treated and scored just like running events. First- through eighth-place finishers score 10, 8, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 points, respectively, for their team. At the end of the meet all the points scored for the team are added up, and the team finishing with the most points is crowned state champion.



Chase Owen anchors the 4x100m relay at the 2010 State Meet. Chase figures to be a vital contributor to the 2011 State squad.

Photo courtesy of Mr. Jamie Tillman.

Congratulations to Jack Beckner, Class of 2012



*Champion of the 2011
Founder's Day Race*

Lax is back

By Connor Caldwell
Sports Editor

Spring is finally here, and while some students may be enjoying the weather or looking forward to summer, bros across America are pumped for their time to shine.

One of our very own Lax bro experts, James Higgins, recently enlightened me on what it means to him to Lax. Obviously, this time of year is when he grows out his flowing locks, and lets it rage.

An awe-inspiring description of said "flow" or "lettuce" is available for all to see at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nqg01Nk3SYI>. If you have not already seen the "Ultimate Lax Bro" YouTube series, you seriously need to crawl out from beneath the rock under which you've been living and open your eyes to the world. But as most Lax bros would agree, looking good on the field is almost more important than playing well. There are priorities in life that nobody can escape.

But back to MBA, our Lax team is one of, if not the most, impressive teams in the state. Led by attacks Ben Charpentier, Clay Adams, and Connor Pagnani, it's pretty hard to go wrong. Since I've already injected YouTube into the article, I may as well go back to it. Our recent strong victory over McCallie just before prom is documented in the video found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zj9ZjWNRjNM>. Even if Lax is not your sport, any person who considers himself a man in any way will watch this video and be shocked and awed by the raw

athleticism showcased throughout it. As we always do on the Hill, our team simply dominates.

I went on a hunt around school to find player perspectives on the team, but it turns out that it is harder than you may believe. When asked about his beautiful goal in the McCallie game, Ben Charpentier simply replied, "Hold on, bro. I'm about to send 100 lines..." Fail. So I moved to Alex Austin, the goalie for the team. Surprisingly, he didn't even answer me in English. His only response when asked about the team was "Verdad que si, Connor?" Another fail.

At this point, I had given up completely on my quest, until the ever dependable Miller Higgins, an honorary Lax bro, gave me this editorial nugget: "They're really good, bro. Like really good." So there you have it, everyone. The MBA Lax bros are really good. Let's go support them in their run for a state title and watch them Roll Red all over the competition.

MBA Track can win it all this year

By Stephen Bedard
Staff Sports Writer

The MBA Varsity Track team has gotten off to a fast start this year, winning all three relay meets, all four weekly dual meets, and the City Championship.

At the Highland games, the team won the shot put, pole vault, stone throw, 4x800, shuttle hurdle, and distance medley relays to coast to a 27 point win over second-place Lipscomb.

At the Buster Relays, the victories by Nathan Fouts and Ryan Carr in the pole vault, Van East in the high jump, Eric Anderson in the freshman 1600, Stephen Bedard in the 800, and the "A" team Distance Medley relay were enough to pull the team to a 76.5 victory over the 27-team field.

In the Doug Hall Relays, held at

MBA, the team finished 1st out of 21 teams. The pole vault, shuttle hurdle, 4x800, and the distance medley relays were all champions. The highlight of the meet, however, was the 4x1600 relay team, composed of junior Daniel Peters and seniors Andrew Powell, Ryan Hill, and Michael Peters, who smashed the old school record of 18:59.9 by over 40 seconds with their time of 18:16.36, an average of 4:34 per leg. The team sent nine runners to the Great 8 Invitational, highlighted by runner-up finishes by Andrew Powell and Bryan Oslin in the 800 and 300 intermediate hurdles, respectively.

In the City Championships, with finals last Friday night, MBA handily won, more than doubling runner-up Stratford's score. Michael and Daniel Peters went 1, 2 in the 3200, followed by Ryan Hill in third to round out the sweep. The younger Peters went on to win the 1600m, with a time of 4:28.20. Brian Oslin destroyed the competition in the 300 intermediate hurdles by running 39.28 to win by over two seconds. Nathan Fouts placed second in the pole vault, clearing 12', and Andrew Powell and Stephen Bedard placed second and third in the 800m, with times of 1:57.16 and 1:59.23. MBA also boasted three third place finishes in the three jumps thanks to Chase Owen in the triple, Van East in the high, and Bryan Oslin in the long.

The depth, strength, and, most of all, speed of the 2011 varsity track team makes it one of the most formidable squads in the state. Region Finals are Friday, May 20th, and State is the next weekend, on the 27th. (I think they hear us coming...)



Students mill around after cheering their classmates in the race around the quad.

Photo courtesy of Mr. Jamie Tillman

Scott Dalton expounds on etiquette of *Facebook*

By Scott Dalton
Staff Life Counselor

Facebook.

Let's cut straight to the chase: yes, I use Facebook. If you aren't using it and are between the ages of 16 and 24, chances are you are one of those hipsters that goes around preaching about the destruction of our society due to technology as you update your tumblr or as you blog about it viciously on your personal website.

Let's be honest, everyone is social networking these days, but half of them need to get out from behind the screen and stop clogging up my mini-feed. So, sign your anti-dilution clause, Eduardo Saverin, because we are about to go to school on how to optimize your Facebook page without people taking screen shots of your "year in statuses" and sending them around via email to all their bros to get a good laugh for the day.



Above: Walton Macey has amassed nearly 80 pokes. Very impressive... but also rather scary.

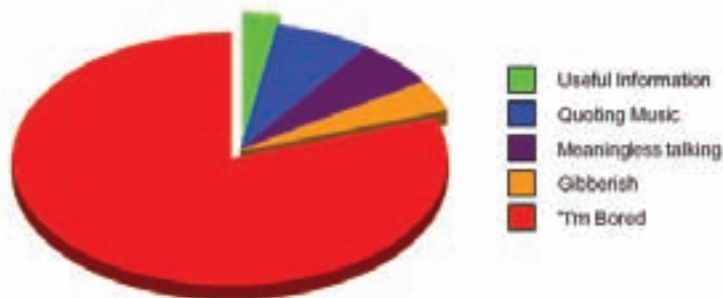
one is interested in the song lyric you just quoted because you didn't write it, it's not about the person reading it, and it's just Coldplay, and they are sub-par on most rainy days. If you want to update your status, get a twitter, then delete your account. You don't deserve a twitter, you are not a celebrity.

"Friending" people is a delicate art to say the least. Take a graph of an inverted

status updates oftentimes want to make me take my computer and literally burn it in my backyard. It's that bad. Here's the thing, NO ONE CARES. Really, I think it's nice that you are "really bored, text me," but the last time I checked, you might as well wear a target on your chest that says, "Hey! I have no friends, will you please talk to me but only over the internet so I can take time to formulate my responses and act witty and clever only until we hang out in person and then it becomes painstakingly awkward and we never talk again?"

Also, to be quite frank with you, no one is interested in the song lyric you just quoted because you didn't write it, it's not about the person reading it, and it's just Coldplay, and they are sub-par on most rainy days. If you want to update your status, get a twitter, then delete your account. You don't deserve a twitter, you are not a celebrity.

Status Updates



parabola with friends on the x-axis and awesomeness of your page on the y. Starting out, as your friends progress, your page becomes way cooler as you gain more friends. However, at some point you reach a maximum (exception: Chuck Norris), and all of a sudden people start to notice that you are deliberately "friending" people you have met only once or have vaguely seen from a distance one time at some party.

As you continue to "friend" more random people who don't know you or probably hate you, the elusiveness of your friendship begins to tank, and so does your social status. That being said, beware of the friendships you decide to add on Facebook, because after 1,200 friends or so your world will become synonymous with "not now."

I think out of all the dumb applications Facebook has to offer, the "gift" category claims the prize. Don't get me wrong, it's really nice to receive a gift on Facebook, but what am I supposed to do with a green sour patch kid that sits idle on my page? I think what bothers me the most that it isn't even animated. It's not like that stupid Microsoft paper clip guy that comes up and dances a jig and performs functions far less superior to actually googling a topic. At least that guy makes an effort. Sour patch kid just looks at me menacingly with someone's name at its feet, a constant reminder that one of my friends didn't care enough to go out to Walgreens and pony up 89 cents to buy me a pack of food.

Games on Facebook could possibly be the most annoying feed notification of all time. No, I do not want to play bejeweled blitz on an all-star team with you for the international bejeweled blitz tournament because I don't like bejeweled blitz...or you for that matter. Thank you so much for the 9 millimeter and grillz in your mafia war, but I don't even know what that is and I quite frankly don't condone the violence of the mafia organization nor do I have a mouth that can take the weight of 24 carat diamonds in my virtual gang-member persona, so no, I think I'll ride the pine for this street fight.

And finally, Farmville. I am so embarrassed for you if you ever played that game.

The fact that you are using Wi-Fi to harvest crops is absurd in the first place, but I know you are guilty of setting your alarm at four in the morning to harvest your strawberries so they wouldn't wilt, and that alone is sad.

One thing that never ceases to bother

me is that stupid friend finder on the left side of the page, you know, that "people you may know" section featuring two or so people who you never knew and quite frankly have no intention of ever getting to know. Yes, I understand that we have 4 mutual friends, but that fact that you are Scandinavian living in Italy and somehow happened across three people whom I barely know but who used me to boost their friend level to over 1200 on spring break one year doesn't mean I ever want to come in contact with you. So, I politely press the "x" and then Facebook gets all inquisitive on me and starts to ask these side bar questions like, "do you not know this person?" or "not now?" It's times like those when I wonder if Facebook is really as secure as it claims it is or if Mark Zuckerberg is really that guy down the street on Family Watchdog.

The side bar ads have gotten way too personal on Facebook. I understand that Zuckerberg wants to make social networking a user-friendly and personal experience but the algorithm he spent months of his life developing to target advertisements to potential buyers is creepy and makes me feel weird. First, its scary that these ads know what I am interested in, not to mention they just inflate your sense of self-worth until you log off and realize they were feeding you a bunch of garbage.

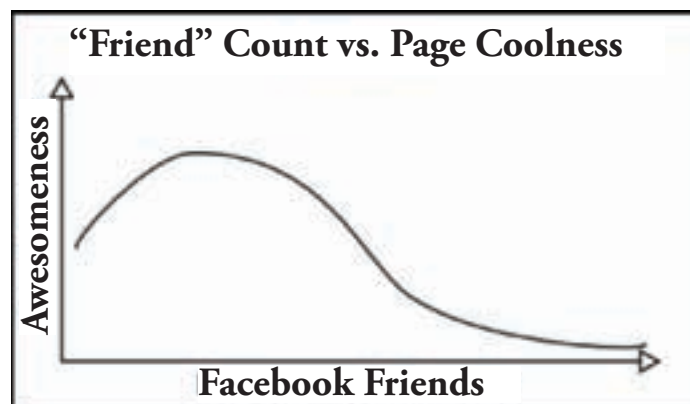
Take for example that one of my interests on Facebook is ping-pong. So here I am respectfully stalking someone's page and this ad in Chinese comes up about how I can go to college on a ping pong scholarship. Well I'm not going to turn down an offer like this, so they have me fill out applications and guarantee me all this money. Silly me, I don't live in a two-story apartment in Beijing nor do I have 5 million yen to blow on training. So now my ping pong dreams are spoiled and I can't sleep at night knowing that some schmuck is sitting in what should be my place sucking on sweet and sour chicken hitting ping pong balls for a living. Thanks, Facebook, for making me feel like I actually have some talent and then destroying my dreams in front of my

face...virtually.

Inbox threads create a constant stream of annoyance. Yes, I am happy I was initially invited to "bonfire at Daniel's house" but no, I don't want to get notified every time someone thinks they need to respond in order to impress the other girls on the thread with their wit. Yes, I am attending, but, no, I don't care that your dog got hit by a car yesterday and you are so sorry you couldn't make it. First of all, the party is now over and no one even remembers you weren't there. Second of all, you are just foaming at the mouth (pun with the dog joke absolutely intended) for attention. Third of all, there are leash laws...get one. So the answer is no, I don't want to be included in the party for the simple reason that I don't care that someone found this hilarious video of some baby singing that is just hilarious.

My final examination is of the "poke" function. First of all, whoever the guy is at the Facebook office who decided to come up with that function should without a doubt become *Time* magazine's man of the 21st century.

I'm not quite sure what the thought process was to create such a strange application, but hat's off to the weirdest guy on Team Facebook. Poking is a useful tool when you have decided to wage a poke war against a fellow bro and the occasional female, but never under any circumstances should you think it is okay to poke someone



(particularly the females) for attention or to actually be serious.

The reason you poke someone is to take a screen shot of it and post it to the other party's wall and write some caption that openly mocks how much of a nerd they are. It's as simple as that. Anything beyond embarrassment or sheer recreation is just absurd.

Dear friends, social networking is a powerful tool these days. I know that right now, as I write this very article, I have received four friend requests and six inbox messages on my E-Harmony account. And, I won't even mention the fact that I am blogging all about this and updating my twitter account with the occasional ichat conversation thrown in.

Be careful not to get too caught up in the fantasy land we call Facebook because it will come back to bite you...or poke you. Remember to keep it classy, and always hit up your friends' walls with posts so it brightens their day. I know I especially appreciate when some girl fills up my entire feed with some videos of herself talking to no one and the same girl's answering her own questions on someone else's wall. So, yeah, guys, go out and do that!

Facebook Users with >1200 "Friends"

